



NATIONAL MOTORISTS ASSOCIATION

Empowering Drivers Since 1982

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Testimony for the Senate Transportation and Infrastructure Committee On SB 61, March 13, 2019

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, The National Motorists Association strongly opposes Senate Bill 61 because it will decrease safety by increasing speed variance on many main collector and arterial streets. It will also create unposted 25 mph speed traps that some cities will unfairly enforce for profits.

PA 85 of 2006 was passed to require realistic speed limits in keeping with the safe driving behavior of the super-majority of drivers, but the law was ignored by many cities and they could not be forced to comply.

It took 10 years to pass PA 445 through 449 of 2016 with stronger requirements to post realistic and safer speed limits on most main collectors, arterials and highways. The 2016 changes involved careful negotiations and agreements with many legislators, the Michigan Municipal League, the Township Association, the National Motorists Association, the State Police, the Road Commission of Oakland County, and others. A key provision excluded main collector and arterial streets that run adjacent to or between residential subdivisions from being a part of them and subject to statutory and unposted 25 mph speed limits.

Any experienced police officer or traffic engineer will confirm speed limits have almost no effect on the actual travel speeds. Only roadway engineering controls the actual travel speeds. After the 2016 changes to speed limit laws, it is no longer legal to set speed limits on most main collector or arterial streets below the 50th percentile speeds of traffic since doing so defines over half the drivers as violators in unfair speed traps.

Michigan does not have 50% or 70% or 90% bad drivers, and we should not permit speed limits that define most safe drivers as in violation of our speed limit laws on main roads.

SB 61 seeks to undo some important provisions of the 2016 changes to our speed limit laws in ways that will decrease safety and create unposted 25 mph speed traps that cities can enforce for profits. Under Act 51 local jurisdictions can designate streets as Major or Local, with Local ones in land areas zoned for residential use by the local governing body. SB 61 would allow governments to create 25 mph zones with no speed limits signs or Traffic Control Orders that are now required on collector and arterial streets adjacent to or between residential subdivisions by designating those collectors and arterials as part of their Local Street System.

A similar bill last session which would have reduced safety, HB 5385, fortunately did not pass.

The National Motorists Association would be happy to work with the sponsors of SB 61 and the companion HB 4118, but we believe these bills should not be passed in their current form because they would reduce safety and facilitate unfair and unposted 25 mph speed traps for unsuspecting motorists.

Thank you. I would be happy to answer any questions.

James C. Walker, for the National Motorists Association