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IMPAIRED
DRIVING
ENDS HERE.



SMARTSTART

January 14, 2025

The Honorable David Reid
Chair, Highway Safety and Policy Subcommittee
Virginia House of Delegates
General Assembly Building
201 North 9th Street
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Dear Chairman Reid,

Thank you for your leadership to make Virginia's roads safer. On behalf of our organizations, we urge your support for HB 2096 to prevent speeding in the Commonwealth by establishing an Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) Program within the Virginia Alcohol Safety Action Program (VASAP). We hope the legislature will pass HB 2096 into law this session to save lives.

Speeding is the number one factor in traffic fatalities in Virginia, accounting for 49.5% of all traffic deaths in 2023. There were 25,274 speed-related crashes, 449 deaths and 13,474 injuries. (Source: Virginia Traffic Safety Facts 2023). According to a [report](#) from the Virginia State Crime Commission released last August, there was a 39% increase in speed-related fatalities in 2022 as compared to 2017.

Whether it's 128 miles per hour in [Louisa County](#), 131 miles per hour in [Norfolk](#), or 133 miles per hour in [Virginia Beach](#), Virginia State Troopers "stop those types of speeds every single day," [said Sgt. Michelle Anaya](#) with Virginia State Police.

Virginia's speeding problem has garnered national attention: In 2021, Virginia ranked second in the nation for the highest number of speeding tickets, with [15.76% of drivers](#) having at least one speeding infraction on record. By 2023, Virginia became the state with the most reckless drivers in the country, with a rate almost [three times the national average](#). Between 2022 and 2023, there was a 10.5% increase in speed-related fatalities on rural roads in Virginia.

Nationally, 38 percent of all fatal speeding crashes involved drunk drivers. The linkage between substance-impaired driving behaviors like drunk and drugged driving with speeding is indisputable. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) in 2022, alcohol impairment was found to be more common among speeding drivers in fatal traffic crashes than

those drivers who were not speeding. Thirty-eight percent of speeding drivers involved in fatal crashes had BACs of .08 g/dL or greater, while 18 percent of non-speeding drivers were in this BAC range.

Traditionally, people who are repeatedly convicted of speeding, or those driving recklessly, face license suspension or even jail. But, in addition to the unintended consequences of potential job loss and family stress, the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators estimates that 75% of people continue to drive on a suspended license.

HB 2096 would allow judges to require drivers convicted of reckless driving, racing, and people who have their driver's licenses suspended for speeding to install and use technology that limits a motor vehicle's speed based on the applicable speed limits and obtain a restricted driver's license. The legislation also would require people convicted of driving in excess of 100 miles per hour to utilize the speed limiting technology with a restricted driver's license. This technology has been used for more than 30 years on commercial fleets. When used properly, it makes it nearly impossible for a chronic speeding offender to exceed the speed limit and gives the driver a chance to change their unsafe driving behavior.

Speeding makes collisions more deadly because even modest increases in speed cause large increases in crash energy. By limiting a driver's speed to the posted speed limit, the legislature can prevent crashes and save lives or mitigate harm when a crash does occur.

AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety's 2023 National Traffic Safety Culture Index Survey shows a major disconnect between drivers' perceptions and actions with regard to speeding:

- 61% of respondents think driving 10 mph over the posted speed limit on residential streets is very or extremely dangerous but 36% reported doing it anyway
- 49% of respondents reported speeding 15 mph above the speed limit on freeways is very/extremely dangerous, but 49% said they do it anyway.

In 2024, the District of Columbia passed legislation to require devices for people whose licenses have been suspended for speeding. Similar legislation has also been introduced this year in Maryland and other states. We urge passage of HB 2096 this year to ensure that Virginia takes the lead in preventing speed-related traffic fatalities.

Sincerely,

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