



April 10, 2025

The Honorable Jamie Pedersen, Majority Leader  
The Honorable Marcus Riccelli, Majority Floor Leader  
The Honorable Manka Dhingra, Deputy Majority Leader  
Washington State Legislature  
Olympia, Washington 98504

Dear Majority Leader Pedersen, Majority Floor Leader Riccelli and Deputy Majority Leader Dhingra:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups and insurance companies working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs, supports enactment of House Bill (HB) 1596 to establish an intelligent speed assistance (ISA) program. Use of ISA by individuals convicted of reckless driving or three or more moving violations, at least one of which is excessive speeding, would be required to drive during license suspension. Installation of an ISA device would prevent the offender's vehicle from speeding and is an alternative to license suspension which still allows driving for daily tasks such as taking children to school, or going to work or medical appointments. This safety upgrade is critical and timely.

Traffic fatalities are rising in Washington, and speeding is a major contributor. In 2023, Washington recorded the most traffic fatalities since 1990.<sup>i</sup> That year, of the 810 traffic fatalities in the state, 252 people were killed in speeding involved crashes.<sup>ii</sup> Speeding related fatalities have increased 56 percent from 2014-2023.<sup>iii</sup> Deaths among vulnerable road users (VRU) increased even steeper, fatalities rose 100 percent for pedestrians and 157 percent for bicyclists and other cyclists during the ten-year period, 2014-2023.<sup>iv</sup> In addition to being tragic, the preventable deaths resulting from speeding are costly. Washington incurred \$6.3 billion in economic damage which is equivalent to a "crash tax" of \$832 per resident each year according to a 2019 analysis.<sup>v</sup> When updated for inflation alone, in 2025, costs would equate to \$8 billion and \$1,050 respectively.<sup>vi</sup>

ISA is technology that can identify the speed limit in real time and limit the speed of vehicles exceeding the specified threshold, which in this bill's case is the posted speed limit. A recent study on an ISA pilot program in New York City that involved 500 city fleet vehicles and over 2.9 million miles of driving showed ISA produced a 64 percent reduction in overall speeding and an 82 percent decrease on high-speed roads.<sup>vii</sup> Due to the program's success, it is now being expanded to 2,100 vehicles.<sup>viii</sup>

This technology is urgently needed because excess speed contributes to both the frequency and severity of motor vehicle crashes and proves especially dangerous for VRUs such as pedestrians, bicyclists and roadside first responders who lack the protective structure of a vehicle. Small increases in speed cause serious declines in safety. The average risk of death for a pedestrian is 10 percent at an impact speed of 23 mph, 25 percent at 32 mph, and 50 percent at 42 mph.<sup>ix</sup> Vehicle occupants suffer its impacts as well, crash tests showed that modest five to 10 mile-per-hour (mph) increases in speed can have a severe impact on a driver's risk of injury or death.<sup>x</sup>

HB 1596 will improve safety and better protect all Washington road users while curbing related costs. We urge you to enact the measure during this year's legislative session to save lives.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

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- i WTSC. (2024, May 13). *Washington Traffic Deaths Reach 33-Year High* (press release) available [here](#).
- ii State Traffic Safety Information for Washington (2023), NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
- iii State Traffic Safety Information for Washington (2023), NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
- iv State Traffic Safety Information for Washington (2023), NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
- v The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019, NHTSA, Feb. 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.
- vi CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, Jan. 2019 to Jan. 2025, available at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.
- vii New York City Department of Citywide Administrative Services. (2024, October 30). DCAS & U.S. DOT Volpe Announce Municipal Speeding Reduction of 64% in New Report on Intelligent Speed Assistance [Press release] available [here](#).
- viii Ibid.
- ix Impact Speed and a Pedestrian’s Risk of Severe Injury or Death, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Sep. 2011., available at <https://aaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2011PedestrianRiskVsSpeedReport.pdf>.
- x Impact of Speeds on Drivers and Vehicles – Results from Crash Tests, AAA Foundation for Safety, Humanetics, and IIHS, Jan. 2021, available at <https://www.iihs.org/api/datastore/document/bibliography/2218>.