



Senior Deputy Prosecuting Attorney Amy Freedheim
King County Prosecuting Attorney's Office
Chair Felony Traffic Unit



March 31, 2025

The Honorable Marko Liias
Chair, Transportation Committee
Washington State Senate

The Honorable Curtis King
Ranking Member, Transportation
Committee
Washington State Senate

Dear Chair Liias and Ranking Member King,

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to making Washington's roads safer. On behalf of the organizations listed above, we applaud the Washington State Legislature's efforts to address the issue of speeding by introducing **House Bill 1596**, sponsored by Representative Mari Leavitt. This important and timely legislation establishes an Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA) Program, offering a safe driving alternative for individuals whose licenses would otherwise be suspended. We respectfully urge the Senate Transportation committee to advance HB 1596, as it represents a vital step towards creating safer communities, promoting safe driving habits and saving lives. The bill is bipartisan and advanced out of the House of Representatives 84-12.

Driving in Washington state has become increasingly dangerous. Over 30% of fatalities on Washington roads involved speeding drivers. Not only are these avoidable deaths tragic, but the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimates that in 2019 alone, the economic cost of speed-related crashes across the United States was \$58.6 billion (January 2025).

Current RCW requires license suspension for reckless driving or repeated moving violations in a single year, aiming to enhance road safety but often failing. The sudden loss of transportation can cause job loss or hardship for drivers responsible for dependents. Moreover, the system is ineffective, as 75% of offenders continue driving with a suspended license.

If adopted, HB 1596 would allow drivers convicted of reckless driving, or three or more moving violations, at least one of which is excessive speed, to install and use technology that limits a motor vehicle's speed based on the applicable speed limits, in lieu of license suspension. This provides individuals an opportunity to integrate back into their routines



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and maintain their responsibilities, while ensuring others on the road are safe from dangerous driving behavior.

This technology has been a proven effective method to change driver behavior for over two decades. In London, ISA reduced bus speeding from 15%-19% to 1%-3%. In New York City, a pilot program with 300 municipal vehicles saw 99% compliance with speed limits over 1 million miles, along with a 37% drop in hard braking, improving safety.

We strongly urge the passage of HB 1596 this year to ensure that Washington takes a measurable step forward to save lives by preventing speed-related traffic fatalities and changing driver behavior.

cc:

Members of the Senate Transportation Committee

Hannah McCarty, Senate Democratic Caucus

Martin Presley, Senate Republican Caucus

Kelly Simpson, Senate Committee Services

Heyley Gamble, Senate Committee Services

Jenna Forty, Senate Committee Services

Brandon Popovac, Senate Committee Services

Bryon Moore, Senate Committee Services