ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
& AUTO SAFETY

February 23, 2026

The Honorable Ann M. Williams, Chairperson
The Honorable Robert "Bob" Rita, Vice Chairperson
The Honorable Ryan Spain, Republican Spokesperson
House Executive Committee
Illinois House of Representatives
State Capitol, 401 S. Spring Street
Springfield, Illinois 62706

Dear Chairperson Williams, Vice-Chairperson Rita and Republican Spokesperson Spain:

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) 4281. This legislation would enable municipal use of speed safety cameras in safety zones in all municipalities with a population of 25,000 or greater in Cook County. We urge you to take swift action to expand use of this proven, lifesaving technology to curb speeding and the deadly consequences.

Speed is a major contributor to crashes in Illinois. In 2023, of the 1,241 traffic fatalities in the state, 35 percent were speeding related which exceeds the national average of 29 percent.[1] Speeding related fatalities in Illinois increased 25 percent from 2014 to 2023.[2] During the same period fatalities among vulnerable road users (VRUs) increased as well with a 62 percent rise in pedestrian fatalities and a 52 percent uptick in bicyclist and other cyclists fatalities.[3] Moreover, traffic fatalities in Cook County increased 28 percent from 2019 to 2023.[4] In addition to the physical and emotional burden, traffic crashes exact a financial toll. Traffic crashes cause nearly $14 billion of economic damage to Illinois annually which is equivalent to a "crash tax" of $1,103 per resident, according to a 2019 analysis.[5] When updated for inflation alone, in 2026, costs would equate to approximately $18.1 billion.[6]

Small increases in speed cause serious declines in safety. Crash tests show that speed upticks of even five to ten miles-per-hour (mph) greatly escalate a driver's risk of injury or death.[7] Speed increases also immensely impact pedestrians and other vulnerable road users (VRUs). 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.[8] Further, drivers who speed have been shown to exhibit additional deadly driving behaviors; more than half (51 percent) of speeding passenger vehicle drivers in fatal crashes were unbuckled, compared to 23 percent of non-speeding drivers.[9]

Speed safety cameras are verified to deter speeding and its impact and are recommended for adoption by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), among others.[10] A study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found that speed safety cameras alone resulted in a 19 percent reduction in the likelihood that a crash caused a fatal or incapacitating injury.[11] Similarly, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) found that automated speed enforcement reduces fatalities and injuries by 20-37 percent and is particularly effective in school and construction zones.[12] A study by Carnegie Mellon University of speed safety cameras in Philadelphia, PA found a 90 percent reduction in speeding and an approximately 50 percent decrease in crashes and injuries relative to the most similar arterials, all arterials and local roads in Philadelphia.[13] Furthermore, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58) permits use of certain federal funds for automated enforcement programs in school and work zones.

Law enforcement risk their lives when performing their duties every day. Yet, it is implausible for law enforcement officers to be everywhere and catch every violation. Speed safety cameras augment traditional enforcement without requiring a traffic stop and will improve safety in safety corridors.

Advocates urges you to support HB 4281 and similar legislation to expand speed safety camera use to save lives.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

cc: House Executive Committee members

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[1] State Traffic Safety Information for Illinois, NHTSA, available at https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm; Traffic Safety Facts 2023 Data: Speeding, NHTSA, Jun. 2025, DOT HS 813 721, available at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813721.

[2] State Traffic Safety Information for Illinois, NHTSA, available at https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm.

[3] State Traffic Safety Information for Illinois, NHTSA, available at https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm.

[4] State Traffic Safety Information for Illinois, NHTSA, available at https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm.

[5] 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.

[6] CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, January 2019 to January 2026 dollars, available here.

[7] 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/datastoredocument/bibliography/2218.

[8] 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.

[9] Traffic Safety Facts 2021 Data: Speeding, NHTSA, Jul. 2023, DOT HS 813 473, available at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813473.

[10] Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles, NTSB, July 2017, SS-17-01, available at https://www.ntsb.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf.

[11] Effects of Automated Speed Enforcement in Montgomery County Maryland on Vehicle Speeds, Public Opinion and Crashes, IIHS; available at https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2097.

[12] Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide, Federal Highway Administration, January 2023, available at Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide.

[13] Evaluating the Effectiveness of Urban Speed Cameras on Traffic Safety in a Period of Dramatic Change, Carnegie Mellon University, July 2024, available at https://ppms.cit.cmu.edu/media/project_files/Guerra_Erick_420.pdf.