



To: Senate Committee on Transportation
From: Shawn Steward – Manager, Public & Government Affairs
AAA Kansas
Date: February 15, 2024
Re: Support of SB 476

Chairman Peterson and members of the committee,

I write today to provide **AAA Kansas' support of SB 476**, which creates a traffic infraction for excessive speeding, defined as operating a motor vehicle at a speed of 100mph or more.

AAA, nationwide and here in Kansas, is a leading advocate for the safety and security of all travelers, including drivers and occupants of vehicles as well as others on and around the roads. On behalf of the more than 350,000 members AAA proudly serves in Kansas, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to offer support for legislation that will create stronger awareness of the serious dangers of speeding and penalize those caught violating the speed limit at extreme levels.

This driving behavior is selfish, ill-advised, and irresponsible. Additionally, excessive speeding – for which there is no reasonable rationale on public roadways – puts lives in jeopardy. It must be addressed and curtailed in the name of roadway safety for everyone in Kansas.

Dangers of Speeding

In 2021, 12,330 people killed were killed in speeding-related crashes nationwide, an 8% increase over the previous year, according to the latest available statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). Speeding accounted for more than 1,000 fatalities a month on average.

Speeding doesn't just put a driver and his or her passengers at risk, it threatens everyone on and around the roads. Of those killed in speeding-related crashes nationwide in 2021, 599 were pedestrians and 84 were bicyclists.

Speeding makes it more difficult to control a vehicle, extends the stopping distance and reduces the ability to steer safely around other vehicles, pedestrians or bicyclists on or near the road.

Speeding also increases crash severity, resulting in more fatalities and severe injuries from the impact. The [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#), in conjunction with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and Humanetics, tested cars in crashes at 40, 50 and 56 miles per hour in a study on the dangers of raising speed limits.

- *At 40 mph...there was minimal intrusion into the driver's space*
- *At 50 mph...there was noticeable crumpling and damage to the driver's door, dashboard and footwell*
- *At 56 mph, the interior suffered severe damage with the crash test dummy recording neck and leg injuries.*

At the two higher speeds (50 and 56 mph), the test dummies head went through the airbag, slamming into the steering wheel indicating a high risk of facial fractures and severe brain injury. SB 476 addresses extreme speeds more than twice as high as those included in these tests.

The study concluded that high speeds cancel out the benefits of all of the safety improvements on our cars, including air bags. The faster a driver is going before a crash, the less likely they will be able to get down to a survivable speed even if they're braking before impact. Speeders are literally outdriving the enhanced safety features on their vehicles.

NHTSA estimated that the financial cost of speed-related crashes in 2019 was about \$46 billion. ([*Blincoe et al., 2023*](#)).

AAA Kansas supports SB 476 to help prevent not only the significant financial costs but also the devastating impact of human injury and death created by excessive speeding.

Thank you for considering this important traffic safety legislation, and we urge your support.

Respectfully,
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