



more, better & safer bicycling

March 11, 2025

Dear Chair Robert E. Craven Sr, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee,

Regarding your hearing today, Tuesday, March 11th 2025, on House Bill 5930, amending the Automated School Zone Speed Enforcement System Act of 2016,

Today, communities across Rhode Island face an epidemic of speeding on our roads. In 2023, we saw a significant increase in traffic fatalities, totaling 72 across the state. Speeding is a major contributor to traffic fatalities and serious injuries, most often endangering our vulnerable populations, including children, elderly, and people with disabilities. Reckless driving creates environments where those who want to walk, roll, or bike feel unwelcome and unsafe. To address these problems, we need collective action to slow down speeds on our roads by using design and enforcement. Slower is safer.

Bike Newport supports the legislative action championed by Rep. Rebecca Kislak, to expand the range of School Zones for the purposes of automated enforcement from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, a measure that could have big implications for public safety across the Ocean State. Automated enforcement systems have been shown to significantly reduce speeding and crashes by changing driver behavior. Also, it frees up our law enforcement to address real crime in our communities. These automated systems help to keep all users of our roads safe, including motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. By expanding the range of School Zones from $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile, we will create safer environments around areas that hold some of our most Vulnerable Road Users (VRUs). The children of Rhode Island deserve to feel safe getting to school no matter how they get there.

On behalf of the board, staff, volunteers, and participants of Bike Newport,

Sincerely,

Bari Freeman
Executive Director

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