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To: House Judiciary Committee
Subject: support for H8098 from RI Transit Riders

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Dear House Judiciary Committee

This is Barry Schiller writing for RI Transit Riders in support of H8098, the Super Speeder Accountability Act.

It is clear that bus riders, being outside the bus when needing to go to/from bus stops, whether as pedestrians, bicyclists, or wheelchair users, are very vulnerable to dangerous driving, especially speeding. This is because speed kills. Reportedly (from Gemini) the chance of being killed when outside a vehicle are about 10% if hit by a vehicle going 20 mph, 40% if hit by a vehicle going 30 mph, and rising to 80% if hit by a vehicle going 40 mph. Speed kills and those who repeatedly speed need to be deterred. We note the bill is really preventative rather than punitive in that it allows such people to keep driving but uses technology to prevent them from speeding in the future.

It is reasonable for the bill to define "super speeders" on the roads that most buses operate (where speed limits are 40 mph or less) as going more than 20 mph over the speed limit. For example, on Smith St near where I live, a driver would have to go over 50 mph to be a super speeder. That would be intrinsically very dangerous on such a street, and not just for bus users!

As safety on our roads is a priority, now that there is an Intelligent Speed Assistant (ISA) device technology available that can prevent super speeders from repeating such behavior, we should use it as a tool in our judicial system. We understand data is available that shows this tool is effective in enhancing roadway safety. Thus we urge your Committee and the legislature to take this legislation seriously, study the data, the experience of other jurisdictions that use ISA, and pass a bill to enable that technology to be used to make our roads safer.

Thank you for your attention to our views.

Barry Schiller, for RI Transit Riders
cc Amy Glidden, RITR Chair