



To: Senate Committee on Transportation
From: Shawn Steward – Manager, Public & Government Affairs
AAA Kansas
Date: February 5, 2025
re: Support of SB 113

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to offer this written testimony in support of SB 113.

Since AAA's founding in 1902, the not-for-profit, fully tax-paying organization has been a leader and advocate for the safety and security of all travelers. AAA proudly serves more than 350,000 Kansans. On behalf of AAA Kansas, I thank you for the opportunity to offer support for SB 113, legislation that would improve safety for all road users and allow the traffic safety and law enforcement communities additional opportunity to educate the motoring public of the tragic consequences of speeding, especially at speeds significantly over the posted speed limit..

The term "reckless" is defined as "marked by lack of proper caution; careless of consequences."

Make no mistake, the act of driving over 100 mph or more than 35 mph above the posted speed limit on a public roadway is the perfect example of recklessness, so this activity should be added to the Kansas statute on reckless driving, with its associated penalties.

Injuries and Deaths Due to Speeding

Speeding is a major factor in traffic crash deaths and injuries. In the most recent U.S. crash statistics available from the U.S. Department of Transportation (2022):

- Speeding was a factor in 29% of all traffic fatalities
- 12,151 people died in those crashes, an average of 33 people per day
- 300,595 people were injured in speeding-related crashes.

According to Kansas Department of Transportation, traffic crash statistics, between 2014 and 2023 on Kansas roadways, there were:

- 50,653 speed-related crashes
- 841 fatalities and 21,547 injuries related to those speed-related crashes

Consequences of Speeding

Excessive speeding is more than just breaking the law. The consequences are far-ranging:

- Greater potential for loss of vehicle control;
- Increased stopping distance after the driver perceives a danger;
- Reduced effectiveness of in-vehicle occupant protection equipment/technology (e.g. seatbelts, air bags, and automatic emergency braking)
- Decreased effectiveness of roadway safety structures (e.g. guardrails, impact attenuators, crash cushions, median dividers, and concrete barriers)
- Increased degree of crash severity leading to more severe injuries; and
- Economic implications of a speed-related crash.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) estimated that the economic cost of speed-related crashes was about \$46 billion in 2019.

Dangers for All Road Users

Small increases in speed can have huge effects on crash outcomes for road users. According to research by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, an increase in impact speed from 40 mph to 50 mph almost triples the risk of a serious or worse injury for the driver. But speeding is not only dangerous for those in vehicles, pedestrians also face an increased risk of injury as speeds increase. Once impact speeds reach over 30 mph, pedestrians face a 50% risk of severe injury and a 25% risk of death, and at impact speeds of 58 mph, pedestrians face a 90% risk of death.

Speeding and Road Conditions

Additionally, speeding becomes an increasingly important factor for drivers involved in fatal crashes as roadway surface conditions deteriorate. In 2022, speeding was a factor in fatal crashes for:

- 18% of drivers on dry roads
- 21% on wet roads
- 33% on roads with snow or slush
- 39% on roads with moving or standing water
- 41% on roads with ice or frost
- 44% on roads with mud, dirt, or gravel

Speeding, especially at excessive levels, is an undeniable danger on our roadways, playing a significant role in the number and severity of crashes, injuries and fatalities. AAA Kansas supports effective laws and targeted enforcement designed to reduce aggressive and reckless driving behavior. Excessive speeding, as outlined in SB 113, is extremely dangerous, and our organization is in favor of integrating this behavior under the Kansas' reckless driving statute, with the appropriate penalties levied on the most serious speeding offenders.

In the spirit of making Kansas roadways safer for all, we respectfully urge your support of SB 113.

I am available to provide additional information or discuss this testimony upon request.

Respectfully,

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