

February 18, 2025

HB0963: Montgomery County - Highways - Maximum Speed Limits MC 1-25

Chair Korman and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

I support HB0963, which allows a reduction of the maximum speed limit in Montgomery County on a highway without performing an engineering and traffic investigation.

We know that reducing the speed of vehicles results in the reduction of injuries and fatalities, with the IIHS¹ having a quick summary. Unfortunately, the time it takes to implement changes where identified needs exist today is too long. In this common sense update, we are allowing the local DOT to make the changes needed to ensure all road users have a better chance of survival and reduced injury. Any crash interaction between a motor vehicle and vulnerable road user would ultimately be reduced outright due to everyone having longer reaction times.

As a frequent pedestrian and bicyclist, I know what it feels like to be hit while walking, buzzed by motor vehicles at or above the speed limit on a 35 mph road while I ride an inadequate 4-ft shoulder. I also drive and know that when I drive even a couple MPH below the speed limit on a 35 mph posted road, for example, I have much more time to react, and I'm much more likely to slow down and wait for pedestrians to cross roads.

If a section of road needs adjusting to better align with the design guidance offered from the local Complete Streets Design Guide or the Pedestrian Master Plan, then Montgomery County would be able to make those changes in a timely manner with this bill.

Anything we can do to help save lives for people navigating our roads in a motor vehicle, bicycle, scooter, wheel chair, or on foot is a step in the right direction.

I urge a favorable reading from the committee so that it can be brought to the House floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

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¹ <https://www.iihs.org/topics/speed>