

Support for House Bill 4014

As the Chief of Police for the City of Holland and someone that has been trying to change the current speed limit law after the unfortunate language changes that took place in 2017, I wholeheartedly endorse HB 4014. The Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police, in which I am a member, also endorses this Bill.

The new language in HB 4014 will move the language back to allow for the rounding to “within 5 mph” of the 85th percentile speed and do away with the requirement to round to the “nearest multiple of 5 mph” of the 85th percentile speed. Information from studies, traffic engineering handbooks and conversations with the Michigan State Police indicates that the intent of the 85th percentile approach is to set the speed limit at or below the 85th percentile. The “within 5 mph” of the 85th percentile language in this bill will allow for this to occur in all instances. With the language of “rounded to the nearest multiple of 5 mph” of the 85th percentile, there is a requirement to round up in many cases and go above the 85th percentile. Rounding up can create the speed limits to be inflated up to and above the 90th percentile.

Additional language in HB 4014 assists greatly in clarifying what is needed to move speed limits to the 50th percentile. There continues to be confusing and differing opinions on the meaning of the current language. This new language also provides some minimal flexibility for unique situations within each community by using an engineering study to help to protect areas with high pedestrian / bicycling movement and other areas such as schools, parks and college campuses.

Law enforcement leaders understand and agree with the 85th percentile philosophy in most cases. However, like many other situations in law enforcement, not every traffic condition can be mandated and flexibility with some unique environments should occur by allowing for an engineering study to consider all conditions before setting a speed limit.

Respectfully submitted,

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City of Holland