

To: Senate Committee on
Business and Transportation
Re: House Bill 3035
Date: May 4, 2015

House Bill 3035-Flashing Lights

Chair Beyer, Members of the Committee:

For the record, my name is Jodi Hack and I am the Representative for House District 19, which includes parts of south Salem, Aumsville and Turner. Today I have the pleasure of presenting for your consideration House Bill 3035. This bill is very near and dear to my heart and I am very grateful to have the opportunity to share it with you today.

I would like to start by once again thanking former Representative and current Marion County Commissioner Kevin Cameron, along with the wonderful parents, teachers, and staff of Cloverdale Elementary who brought this matter to my attention out of concern for the safety and wellbeing of their children and students. Without their efforts, driven by love for the children of Cloverdale, this bill would not exist. Period.

Background

Allow me to provide you with some background on this bill: under the current ORS a flashing light used as a traffic control device to indicate that children may be arriving at or leaving school may be operated only at times when children are scheduled to arrive at or leave school. In the cases of most schools this may be a sufficient rule, but there are certain schools where allowing for the school zone lights to flash only at the beginning and end of the school day is not enough to ensure the safety of the children. Cloverdale Elementary is one of those schools. At this little elementary school located in the city of Turner off of Parrish Gap Road, there is in place a 55mph speed limit. To make matters worse the only parking space available to staff and parents is located across this high speed road. This means that every man, woman, and child that attends, works at, or visits Cloverdale Elementary will have to pass this hazardous road at least twice a day. Simply put, as it stands this is a completely unsafe traffic environment for the students of Cloverdale Elementary, and for the other schools across the state facing similar traffic conditions.

Summary

That is where House Bill 3035 comes in. Under this bill, schools located on a street with a speed limit of 45mph or greater and having their parking lot located across the street will be given the authority to activate the flashing lights indicator from the hours of 7am to 5pm on days where school is in session. Studies have shown that drivers respond to the flashing light indicating the presence of a school zone by slowing down to the prescribed speed more consistently than if the flashing light was not involved.

Members of the committee, this is a simple bill. A bill that has one motive and one motive only: to increase the safety and well-being of our children. I believe in this bill, and I believe it will make a positive increase in the level of safety for the schools that are located adjacent to hazardous traffic conditions.

I thank you for your time and consideration and I urge your support. Thank you.