From the desk of Rep. Jeff Reardon

HB 2621: THE CASE FOR PILOTING FIXED SPEED CAMERAS

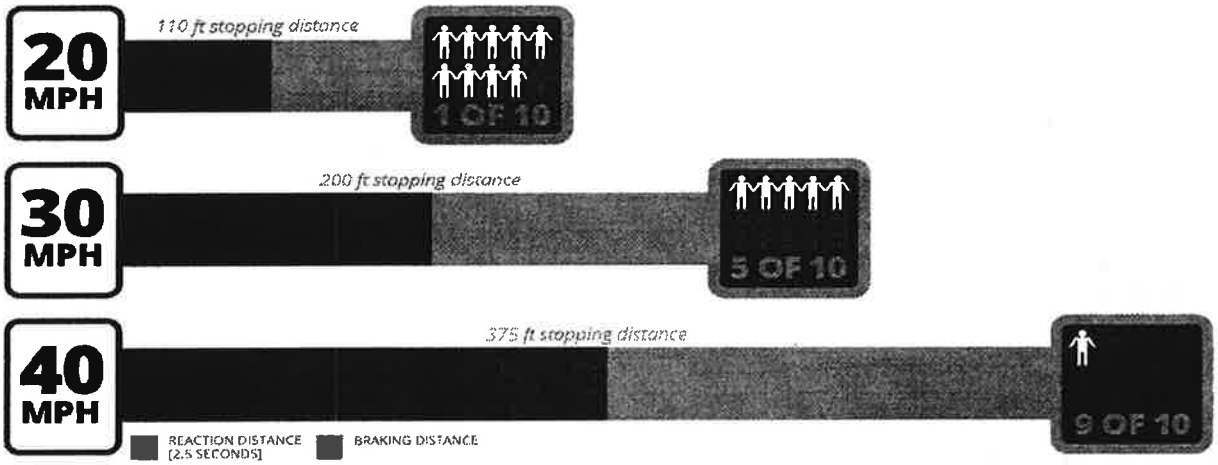
In 2013, 36 people died in traffic crashes in Portland, more than double the number of homicides in the city. The number of people killed on Portland roadways has remained stubbornly flat for the past 20 years. The economic and societal costs of these crashes are immense. The CDC estimates the costs of lost work and medical expenses due to traffic fatalities in Oregon to be $422 million a year.[1] The National Safety Council pegs the cost of traffic fatalities and injuries to be $150 million a year in the City of Portland alone.[2]

THE PROBLEM WITH SPEED ON PORTLAND'S URBAN HIGH CRASH CORRIDORS

The majority of serious crashes in the Portland area occur on arterial roadways. Portland's high-volume, multi-lane arterials suffer serious crash rate 4.3x higher than that of the region's freeway system.[3] The City of Portland designates the worst of these arterial roadways High Crash Corridors. **While only three percent of Portland's road network, these ten High Crash Corridors account for over half of city's pedestrian fatalities.**

Portland's High Crash Corridors often cut through neighborhoods where residents have few transportation options. The poorest Portlanders with the fewest transportation resources often have to cross our busiest, fastest roadways to get to school or access transit. The probability of being struck and killed as a pedestrian are 2.3x higher if you live in a high poverty area of Multnomah County.[4]

Speeding and aggressive driving are the top contributing factors to serious crashes across the region. Traveling at excessive speeds is consistently linked to higher crash risks. The faster a driver is going, the longer it takes them to recognize and react to a dangerous situation. A person struck by a speeding driver on a High Crash Corridor is more likely to die than survive.



CONTROLLING SPEED ON PORTLAND'S URBAN HIGH CRASH CORRIDORS

Over 100 jurisdictions across the country used automated speed enforcement to combat these dangerous driving behaviors. Many cities with safer road systems (notably Seattle, Chicago and New York) are successfully utilizing a traffic safety tool Portland lacks: fixed speed cameras. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration finds that photo radar systems reduce crashes in the range of 20-25 percent. This is a significant crash reduction that would have immediate positive outcomes for our community.

HB 2621 would authorize piloting fixed speed cameras on Portland's most dangerous roads. This would prevent roughly 1,000-2,000 injury crashes and save 12-16 lives over the pilot period. Additionally, up to ~$71 million in related wage and productivity losses, damage, and medical expenses costs would be avoided.

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ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING HB 2621

The Oregonian Editorial Board:
"Unmanned photo radar would simply be a cost-efficient, not to mention racial-profiling-proof, method of detecting and punishing drivers whose indifference to life poses threat."[5]

82nd Avenue Improvement Coalition

Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO)

Bicycle Transportation Alliance

Community School Traffic Safety Coordinating Council

Elders In Action

Foster United

Friends of Barbur

The Jade District

Metro Council

Oregon Coalition of Police and Sheriffs

Oregon Walks

Portland Bicycle Advisory Committee

Portland City Council

Portland Pedestrian Advisory Committee

SW Trails

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1 CDC: http://www.cdc.gov/Motorvehiclesafety/statecosts/or.html

2 National Safety Council: http://www.nsc.org/news_resources/injury_and_death_statistics/Pages/EstimatingtheCostsofUnintentionalInjuries.aspx

3 Metro State of Safety Report: http://library.oregonmetro.gov/files/appendix_22_safetyreport.pdf

4 Governing Magazine: http://www.governing.com/topics/public-justice-safety/gov-pedestrian-deaths-analysis.html

5 March 15, 2015 Oregonian Editorial: http://www.oregonlive.com/opinion/index.ssf/2015/03/1984_hardly_its_simply_time_fo.html