Thomas Hicks,
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State Perspective on Speed

- Speed per se is not a significant contributing cause of accidents.

- Relative speed (differences in speeds of vehicles in the traffic stream) is a contributing cause of accidents.

- Drivers’ speeds are governed more by highway conditions at their time of travel than by any posted speed regulations.
State Perspective on Speed

– 12% of all crashes - speed is a contributing factor
– 31% of fatal crashes - speed is a factor
– 43% of fatal crashes occur on roadways posted under 55 mph
– Public does not perceive speed as a safety issue
State Perspective on Speed

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State Perspective on Speed

- Vehicle speeds are reduced sharply during unfavorable traffic conditions, such as periods of inclement weather, traffic congestion, and poorer highway geometrics.

- Raising posted speed limits will not cause a corresponding jump in vehicle speeds.
State Perspective on Speed

-Speed limits established on the basis of traffic engineering principles will be abided by the majority of drivers.

-There is a practical difference between statutory speed limits and those established on the basis of engineering studies.

-There are valid reasons for having statutory maximum speed limits.
State Perspective on Speed

-Accident severity increases with vehicle speed.

-Most drivers are good and caring drivers – indeed, our rules and regulations to a large degree are based on this fact.

-55 NMSL is cited by a majority of the states as a probable cause of a breakdown in motorist discipline.
State Perspective on Speed

Compliance – Summary of Responses

- 55 NMSL
- TCD Misuse
- Enforcement
- Societal Changes
- TCD Understanding
- TCD Maintenance
- Speed Limits
- Signal Timing
- Driver Education
- WZ TCD’s
- RTOR
- 3 E’s
State Perspective on Speed

-Motorist actions follow well founded and well know rules of human behavior.

-Routine enforcement efforts cannot coerce compliance with a law which is not supported by the public.
State Perspective on Speed

-Unrealistic traffic regulations are counterproductive, and fly in the face of driver expectancy.

-The nation’s drivers are competent and drive in a reasonable and responsive manner well within the bounds of acceptable human behavior.
State Perspective on Speed

+ Speed Limits
  - statutory
  - residential
  - speed zones
  - advisory
  - transitional
  - relative speed
State Perspective on Speed

- uniformity and consistency
- understanding by others (3Es)
- public understanding (PR)
State Perspective on Speed

- ASP
- speed management demos
- Maryland legislation automated enforcement
State Perspective on Speed

+ Speed and Safety

- 85th %-tile
- crash impact & severity
State Perspective on Speed

Crash Involvement Rate by Deviation From Average Speed

Relative Involvement Rate

Deviation From Average Speed (MPH)

85th Percentile

Target Enforcement
**State Perspective on Speed**

**+ Human Factors**

- motorists are confused/program out of kilter with public understanding
- motorists drive by conditions
- positive guidance/meet expectancies
State Perspective on Speed

- time-distance relationships
- elderly concerns
- compliance issues
State Perspective on Speed

+ Enforcement

  - engineering & enforcement together

  - small tolerance
State Perspective on Speed

- working with the courts
- concentrating on the flagrant few
- Maryland legislation automated enforcement
State Perspective on Speed

+ Calming

- poor answer to pure speed control
- attention getting/informational
State Perspective on Speed

- instinctive/sub-conscious reaction is best

- must be uniformly applied with regard to warrants, placement and design
State Perspective on Speed

Public Information and Education

- let’s play it straight with our customers
- we will definitely need public understanding and compliance in the future
- WZTC and ITS
State Perspective on Speed

- public demanding more controls/devices; this causes more frustrations and reckless acts
- it’s hard to fight off what is learned – so let’s teach!
- let’s walk the talk