

The Pennsylvania Radar Coalition

Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police
Association
Pennsylvania Municipal League
Pennsylvania State Association of
Township Commissioners

Fraternal Order of Police,
Pennsylvania State Lodge
Pennsylvania State Association of
Boroughs

Pennsylvania District Attorneys
Association
Pennsylvania State Mayors'
Association

November 3, 2023

The Honorable Kim L. Ward, Senator
President Pro Tempore
Senate Box 203039
Room: 292 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-3039

The Honorable Joe Pittman, Senator
Senate Majority Leader
Senate Box 203041
Room: 350 Main Capitol
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-3041

Re: Senate Bill 459

Dear Senator Ward and Senator Pittman:

Over seven months ago, Senate Bill 459 was referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee, where it remains today. It is a bill that could easily be passed overwhelmingly in the Senate, as it has three times in prior sessions, and in the House, based upon informal canvassing. It is a bill that when it becomes law, will give municipal law enforcement the tools that are *absolutely necessary* to effectively enforce the maximum speed laws mandated by the General Assembly in the Vehicle Code.

To illustrate the positive impact of the passage of Senate Bill 459 into law, the members of the General Assembly need to look no further than the latest statistics from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) published in July 2023. Once again, the statistics confirm that Pennsylvania has *the worst* record for speeding-related fatalities in the United States based upon two measurements. One is *total* speeding-related fatalities and the other is the *percentage* of total *speeding-related* fatalities to total *traffic* fatalities.

With regard to *total* speeding-related fatalities, Pennsylvania, with 500 speeding-related fatalities, ranks *third* behind Texas and California, two significantly more populous states. Among the ten states with the highest totals of speeding-related fatalities, Pennsylvania ranks *first* with 41% when comparing the total speeding-related fatalities to total traffic fatalities. Please see the enclosed table from the latest publication of the NHTSA on speeding.

In addition to these two measurements of speeding-related fatalities, the NHTSA breaks down the *total* speeding-related fatalities by "roadway function class." It is no surprise that the vast majority of speeding-related fatalities in Pennsylvania are occurring on suburban and rural roadways primarily patrolled by municipal police. These Pennsylvania municipal police are severely hampered in controlling vehicle speed because they are barred *by Pennsylvania law* from using modern effective speed-timing devices that are used by municipal police in every other state *except Pennsylvania*.

The Radar Coalition asks that you empathize with the frustrations of municipal police investigating speeding-related fatalities pondering whether the fatalities could have been

deterred had they been allowed to use radar to enforce maximum speed limits on their roadways. The reluctance of the General Assembly to *even allow a floor vote* on radar legislation is extremely disheartening for law enforcement and their elected officials.

In the last legislative session, House Bill 606, a bill similar to Senate Bill 459, was referred to the House Appropriations Committee where it remained for *21 months* and then died. With Senate Bill 459 languishing for over seven months in the Senate Appropriations Committee, history continues to repeat itself and Pennsylvanians continue to die unnecessarily in speeding-related crashes.

For all of the above reasons, the Radar Coalition respectfully requests that Senate Bill 459 be reported out of the Senate Appropriations Committee so that it can once again be voted on by the full Senate and sent to the House for further action. Municipal law enforcement cannot end Pennsylvania's distinction of having *the worst* record for speeding-related fatalities in the nation without your help in providing the essential tools to do so. Please act now!

Sincerely,

Scott L. Bohn, Executive Director
Pennsylvania Chiefs of Police Association

Kelly Callihan, Esq., Executive Director
Pennsylvania District Attorneys Association

Amy Sturges, Deputy Executive Director
- Advocacy, Pennsylvania Municipal League
Pennsylvania State Association of Township
Commissioners

Edward C. Troxell, Director of Government
Affairs
Ronald J. Grutza, Regulatory Affairs
Coordinator
Pennsylvania State Association of Boroughs

James F. Nowalk, President
Pennsylvania State Mayors Association

cc: The Honorable Ryan P. Aument, Majority Whip
The Honorable Kristin Phillips-Hill, Majority Caucus Chair
The Honorable Camera Bartolotta, Majority Caucus Secretary
The Honorable Scott Martin, Appropriations Committee Majority Chair
The Honorable Lisa Baker, Majority Caucus Administrator
The Honorable Daniel Laughlin, Majority Policy Committee Chair
The Honorable Jay Costa, Minority Leader
The Honorable Christine M. Tartaglione, Minority Whip
The Honorable Wayne D. Fontana, Minority Caucus Chair
The Honorable Maria Collett, Minority Caucus Secretary
The Honorable Vincent J. Hughes, Appropriations Committee Minority Chair
The Honorable Judith L. Schwank, Minority Caucus Administrator
The Honorable Katie J. Muth, Minority Policy Committee Chair
The Honorable Greg Rothman, Senator

Table 6. Speeding-Related Traffic Fatalities, by State and Roadway Function Class, 2021

State	Total Traffic Fatalities	Speeding-Related Fatalities		Speeding-Related Fatalities, by Roadway Function Class						
		Total	Percentage of Total Traffic Fatalities	Interstate Rural	Interstate Urban	Non-Interstate Freeway and Expressway	Non-Interstate Other Principal Arterial	Non-Interstate Minor Arterial	Non-Interstate Collector	Non-Interstate Local
Alabama	983	274	28%	36	15	0	46	59	83	35
Alaska	67	27	40%	6	3	0	7	1	5	5
Arizona	1,180	373	32%	15	15	39	90	141	55	8
Arkansas	693	148	21%	8	11	1	26	27	21	54
California	4,285	1,509	35%	59	166	161	450	308	252	113
Colorado	691	202	29%	11	12	3	86	36	29	25
Connecticut	298	119	40%	1	10	11	26	36	30	5
Delaware	136	46	34%	0	4	2	13	9	14	4
District of Columbia	41	19	46%	0	0	1	5	9	0	4
Florida	3,738	391	10%	8	18	3	145	83	85	49
Georgia	1,797	369	21%	8	26	23	82	91	77	62
Hawaii	94	45	48%	0	2	0	28	15	0	0
Idaho	271	59	22%	5	3	1	11	5	18	16
Illinois	1,334	487	37%	24	76	9	123	111	82	57
Indiana	932	252	27%	16	22	4	64	43	57	46
Iowa	356	84	24%	2	3	0	23	12	26	17
Kansas	424	98	23%	7	6	3	12	26	33	11
Kentucky	806	143	18%	13	8	1	28	35	27	31
Louisiana	972	281	29%	30	24	2	54	68	45	58
Maine	153	26	17%	0	0	0	4	3	13	5
Maryland	561	168	30%	2	16	21	48	34	37	9
Massachusetts	417	114	27%	2	21	8	29	25	16	13
Michigan	1,136	321	28%	5	25	16	86	64	67	53
Minnesota	488	167	34%	2	13	6	34	53	39	18
Mississippi	772	122	16%	5	1	0	35	19	35	10
Missouri	1,016	404	40%	11	42	27	104	65	80	75
Montana	239	86	36%	14	8	0	17	9	16	20
Nebraska	221	36	16%	5	5	2	5	5	7	7
Nevada	385	112	29%	2	6	0	36	30	12	26
New Hampshire	118	40	34%	1	1	4	11	6	11	6
New Jersey	699	178	25%	3	9	22	61	35	20	27
New Mexico	481	186	39%	24	12	1	51	32	43	21
New York	1,157	418	36%	4	42	39	109	75	50	99
North Carolina	1,663	478	29%	9	26	29	102	92	124	96
North Dakota	101	29	29%	2	0	0	14	1	2	9
Ohio	1,354	341	25%	4	50	11	54	66	94	56
Oklahoma	762	181	24%	3	10	0	50	20	66	32
Oregon	599	154	26%	5	5	0	44	40	45	15
Pennsylvania	1,230	500	41%	34	29	27	130	91	86	102
Rhode Island	63	20	32%	0	4	2	6	4	3	1
South Carolina	1,198	486	41%	55	23	6	73	186	74	69
South Dakota	148	35	24%	3	0	0	7	12	8	5
Tennessee	1,327	231	17%	9	15	7	77	61	32	30
Texas	4,498	1,568	35%	68	171	79	424	296	386	141
Utah	328	109	33%	15	10	3	38	21	14	8
Vermont	74	30	41%	2	0	0	3	8	9	8
Virginia	973	337	35%	13	42	13	66	79	87	34
Washington	670	206	31%	11	24	14	38	39	60	18
West Virginia	280	64	23%	9	8	0	11	4	20	12
Wisconsin	620	212	34%	6	9	2	55	51	53	35
Wyoming	110	45	41%	8	1	0	18	1	11	5
U.S. Total	42,939	12,330	29%	585	1,052	603	3,159	2,642	2,559	1,665
Puerto Rico	337	112	33%	11	12	0	33	28	23	5

Source: FARS 2021 ARF

Notes: The total columns for all traffic fatalities and for speeding-related fatalities include fatalities that occurred on roads for which the function class was unknown. NHTSA estimates BACs when alcohol test results are unknown.