

June 14, 2022

The Honorable Lena Gonzalez
Chair, Senate Transportation Committee
State Capitol, Room 2068
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Support for AB 1938 (Friedman)—Traffic Safety

Dear Senator Gonzalez,

On behalf of the City of Long Beach, I write to support AB 1938. This bill clarifies legislation enacted last year to provide cities greater flexibility in determining speed limits, rather than being restricted to the State's "85th percentile" methodology. AB 1938 is needed to ensure the intent of this policy change is implemented and that local agencies can successfully achieve Vision Zero objectives to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries.

AB 1938 will clarify a statutory construction concern in the Vehicle Code raised during the Administration's regulatory implementation of one aspect of AB 43 (Friedman) [Chapter 690, Statutes of 2021]. Last year's AB 43 was designed to provide local jurisdictions flexibility in setting speed limits lower than what is otherwise determined by existing State methodology, on a limited number of roads designated as safety corridors, in business activity districts, or near locations where vulnerable populations gather, such as bike lanes or near senior centers.

The amendments proposed by AB 1938 specify that last year's AB 43 was in no way intended to direct the State to eliminate from the California Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices, an option Caltrans had long sustained in the Manual (prior to AB 43) with regard to setting safer speeds where appropriate, wherein cities could reduce speed limits by 5 mph from the nearest 5 mph increment of the 85th percentile speed under circumstances specified in the Manual.

The City supports legislation to provide safe streets for everyone, in alignment with Vision Zero. The local flexibility to maintain or reduce speed limits, particularly in multimodal areas will help advance public safety for all road users. Given these reasons, the City supports the clarifications made by AB 1938.

Sincerely,



THOMAS B. MODICA
City Manager

cc: The Honorable Speaker Anthony Rendon, State Assembly
The Honorable Tom Umberg, State Senate, 34th District
The Honorable Steven Bradford, State Senate, 35th District
The Honorable Mike Gipson, State Assembly, 64th District
The Honorable Patrick O'Donnell, State Assembly, 70th District

