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August 28, 2023
Sent Via Electronic Mail

Dear Senator:

AARP Pennsylvania, which advocates for the more than 4.8 million Pennsylvanians aged 50 and over – including over 200,000 Philadelphia members, offers its support for Senate Bill (SB) 748.

AARP has a vested interest in improving the safety of streets for pedestrians and older drivers because transportation is a foundational pillar that connects people to their communities. Older adults need a variety of convenient and safe transportation options to provide access to jobs, social activities, medical appointments, and community services that support their independence.

Nationwide, roads have become significantly more dangerous in recent years. Despite driving being down, nearly 43,000 people died on the roads in 2022. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, 14,000 of those deaths were persons aged 55 and older. Larger vehicles, increased speeding paired with a lack of enforcement, and the lack of safely designed streets and sidewalks in most communities, are all contributing factors.

Act 86 of 2018 authorized an Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) pilot program intended to reduce the number of accidents and fatalities of highway construction workers and motorists by allowing the use of speed cameras in active work zones. Additionally, Act 86 also placed cameras along Roosevelt Boulevard in Philadelphia, which is known as one of the most dangerous roads in the country.

In December 2022, the Pennsylvania Transportation Advisory Committee, which conducts studies and reports to advise the State Transportation Commission and the Secretary of the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation (PennDOT), released its study that evaluated the ASE pilot program on Roosevelt Boulevard. It found that total crashes and fatal crashes on Roosevelt Boulevard dropped 36% and 11% respectively before and after the installation of the program's implementation, as compared to a 6% reduction in total crashes and 16% increase in fatal crashes throughout Philadelphia over the same time period.

Unsafe roads deter walking, bicycling, and other alternatives to driving. As a result, the overall livability of a neighborhood is compromised. Given this backdrop, AARP supports SB 748 as a life-saving step to promote safer transportation options through proven speed management measures.

We look forward to continuing to work with you to enhance the safety of Pennsylvania's roadways for pedestrians and motorists. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at tosborne@aarp.org or 717-237-6482 or our Associate State Director Alex McMahon at AMcMahon@aarp.org or 717-231-5317.

Respectfully,

Teresa Osborne

State Advocacy Director
AARP Pennsylvania

