

65 MPH ZONES FOR SPEED STUDY OF TRUCKS AND OTHER VEHICLES

House Bill 4377 (Substitute H-4)

House Bill 4781

Sponsor: Rep. Steve Vear

Committee: Transportation

Complete to 8-19-99

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILLS 4377 (SUBSTITUTE H-4) AND 4781 AS INTRODUCED

The bills would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to require a study of higher speed test zones in order to determine whether vehicle speed could be safely increased from 55 miles per hour up to 65 miles per hour on some of Michigan's freeways, U.S. highways, and state trunklines where the current speed limit is 55 miles per hour. House Bill 4377 (Substitute H-4) would amend the section of the code (MCL 357.627) that sets the maximum 55 mile per hour speed for trucks traveling on freeways, and House Bill 4781 would amend the section of the code (MCL 357.628) that establishes maximum speeds for all vehicles on highways and state trunklines.

More specifically, the bills would amend the Michigan Vehicle Code to require the director of the Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Department of State Police, to establish test zones on freeways, U.S. highways and state trunklines (all season route highways) within which the speed limit could be increased to 65 miles per hour on freeways and up to 65 miles per hour on other selected roadways. Test zones would be set up beginning September 1, 1999 and they would continue for one year. The zones would be identified where the speed limit now is 55 miles per hour, in order to conduct a study to determine whether speed limits could be increased. Under House Bill 4781, the total number of highway and freeway miles used for the tests could not exceed 1,500 miles, and the speed limit would be 65 miles per hour in 750 miles or more of the total miles tested.

Under the bills, the findings from the study would be submitted by October 15, 2000, to the chairs of the House and Senate standing committees that consider transportation and traffic issues. The study would be based on traffic congestion and other traffic safety issues, as determined by the director of the Department of State Police, and on engineering criteria as determined by the director of the Department of Transportation. The study would include recommendations as to whether the speed limit could be increased to 65 miles per hour on any freeways, and up to 65 miles per hour on any of the other roadways. Any speed limit increases would be effective January 1, 2001.

Analyst: J. Hunault

■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House staff for use by House members in their deliberations, and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.