

Legislative Analysis



RAISE SPEED LIMIT TO 60 MPH FOR LARGE TRUCKS & SYNCHRONIZE TOWING SPEEDS

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House Bill 5104 (Substitute H-3)

Sponsor: Rep. Bruce Caswell

Committee: Transportation

Complete to 9-22-05

A SUMMARY OF HOUSE BILL 5104 AS REPORTED FROM HOUSE COMMITTEE

The bill would amend Section 627 of the Michigan Vehicle Code (MCL 257.627) to set a speed limit of 60 miles per hour on a limited access highway (freeway) for trucks with a gross weight of 10,000 pounds and truck-tractors with trailers. Currently, the speed limit for these vehicles is 55 miles per hour on highways, streets, or freeways.

The bill also would set the speed limit on a limited access highway for a person operating a vehicle drawing another vehicle or trailer at 60 miles per hour. The current limit is 55 miles per hour for a passenger vehicle drawing another vehicle or trailer. The law is currently silent on the speed limit for a pickup truck drawing another vehicle or trailer, meaning the speed limit is understood to be 70 miles per hour. The new 60 miles per hour limit would apply to all vehicles towing another vehicle or trailer.

The bill would also remove references to the words "drive" and "driver" and replace them with "operate" and "operator."

The bill would take effect six months after being enacted into law.

[NOTE: The code also specifies in general that vehicle operators must "drive at a careful and prudent speed not greater than nor less than is reasonable and proper, having due regard to the traffic, surface, and width of the highway and of any other condition then existing." The code also says, "A person shall not drive a vehicle . . . at a speed greater than that which will permit a stop within the assured, clear distance ahead."]

FISCAL IMPACT:

The bill could result in additional costs to the Michigan Department of Transportation to the extent that it has to replace speed limit signs on the state's limited access highways. There is no estimate of what these additional signage costs would be.

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