



**KID SAFE
SF**

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WALKS**



**A B U N D A N T
S A N F R A N C I S C O**



**THE LEAGUE
OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS**

**RICHMOND
FAMILY
SF**



TransForm
A graphic showing silhouettes of a person walking, a person in a wheelchair, a person on a bicycle, and a bus.
Our communities. Our transportation. Our future.

Asm Lena A. Gonzalez
Transportation Committee Chair
State Capitol, Room 405
1315 10th St
Sacramento, CA 95814

15 June 2023

RE: AB 645 (Friedman)

To Honorable Committee Chair Lena A. Gonzalez:

We, the undersigned organizations, are writing to express our strong support for the implementation of AB 645, enabling a safety system pilot program in California.

According to the National Transportation Safety Board, speeding accounts for nearly a third of all traffic fatalities. In 2021, over 42 thousand Americans lost their lives to traffic violence. In this same year, 4,258 Californians lost their lives to traffic collisions. Unsafe speeds caused a majority of these fatalities.

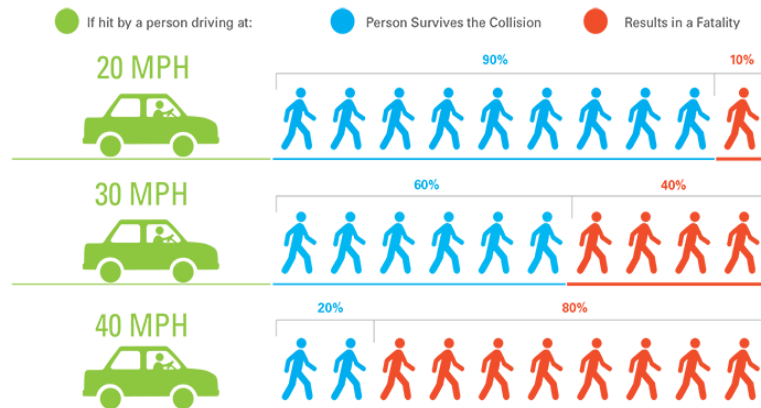


In February 2023, 16-year-old Angel Berumen was killed by a speeding driver in Bakersfield, CA, while walking to Foothill High School. Angel is not alone, as serious injuries and fatalities around schools in Bakersfield are common. A recent [survey of vehicle speeds](#) around 9 schools in Bakersfield found that over 70% of drivers speed

more than 5 miles per hour (mph) over the posted speed limit. These unsafe speeds resulted in 134 pedestrians and 76 cyclists injured or killed in the previous 5 years just around those 9 schools.

The chances of survival in a car crash decrease exponentially the faster the vehicle travels, especially for vulnerable road users. A person struck by a vehicle traveling at 20 mph has a 10% chance of dying. That number increases up to 40% for vehicles going 30 mph and 80% for vehicles going 40 mph. The safety system pilot program is needed to improve the safety of our roads and save lives. As demonstrated in 150 U.S. cities, automated speed cameras are a proven tool in reducing drivers' speed, thus improving safety. Staten Island, NY, reported a 70% decrease in traffic deaths and injuries in locations where speed cameras are present. In Portland, OR, traffic fatalities declined by 46%, and speeding by 10 mph or more decreased by 85% after implementing an automated speed safety program. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, on average, fixed speed cameras reduce injury crashes by 20% to 25%, and mobile speed cameras reduce injury collisions by 21% to 51%.

AB 645 was designed with equity in mind. Traffic violence disproportionately impacts low-income residents and communities of color. AB 645 has significantly lower fines starting at \$50 for going 11-15 miles per hour over the speed limit. This fee is significantly lower than the current price of a



Source: US Department of Transportation

speeding ticket in California which can cost up to \$490. In addition, AB 645 requires that cities reduce fines for those under the poverty line by 80% or offer a community service alternative. For individuals 200% above the federal poverty line, cities must reduce fines by 50%.

AB 645 requires that cities use subsequent revenue towards engineering safer streets. After paying to administer the program, cities must spend the money on infrastructure to promote biking, walking, and slowing cars down. Potential infrastructure changes may include bicycle lanes, median islands, roundabouts, speed humps, etc. Further, AB 645 prohibits cities from shifting existing expenditures on traffic calming measures to backfill the revenue generated into their budget.

AB 645 limits the number of cameras used by each city, and it places performance metrics on cameras to ensure the program's success. If the safety system pilot program has not reduced violations by at least 25%, or second violations by 50%, after 18 months of use, the city is required to start planning the construction of traffic calming or bike/pedestrian infrastructure in areas where the cameras are installed. If cities do not start this construction in two years, the cameras can no longer be used at the location.

Slowing drivers down is imperative for reducing traffic deaths and injuries. In a perfect world, all our streets would be redesigned to encourage much slower speeds by narrowing lanes, installing traffic calming, and other queues to maintain safe speeds. But these reforms will take over 100 years to implement at current funding levels. We cannot accept tens of thousands of traffic deaths and injuries – disproportionately impacting low-income people of color – while we slowly retrofit our roadway infrastructure. AB 645 proposes a balanced approach to help California significantly reduce the 4,258 traffic fatalities, reduce injuries, and improve the safety of our roads for all Californians.

Lastly, AB 645 does not have a fiscal impact for the State of California but for the past several years similar versions of this bill has been held in suspense in the Appropriations Committee. For these reasons, we offer our support of AB 645 and request your help to get this bill through Appropriations and to the floor of the Assembly for a full vote.

Sincerely,

Damian Kevitt
Executive Director
Streets Are For Everyone
(Co-Sponsor AB 645)

Marc Vukceovich
Co-Director of State Policy
Streets for All
(Co-Sponsor AB 645)

Jodie Medeiros
Executive Director
Walk San Francisco
(Co-Sponsor AB 645)

Jared Sanchez
Policy Director
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David Diaz, MPH
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Janelle Wong
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San Francisco Bicycle Coalition

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Advocacy Director
San Diego County Bicycle Coalition

Jeri Lynch
Executive Director
Conor Lynch Foundation

Cynthia Rose & Cris Gutierrez

Tarrell Kullaway
Executive Director
Marin County Bicycle Coalition

Jesse Flores
Coordinator
Norwalk Unidos

Heather Deutsch
Executive Director
MOVE Santa Barbara County

Cynthia Rose
Director
Santa Monica Spoke

Lili Trujillo Puckett
Founder-Executive Director
Street Racing Kills

Sandhya Laddha
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Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition

Pastor Patricia Strong-Fargas
Co-Chair
Faith for SAFER Streets

Lauren Santangelo
Executive Director
Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle
Professionals (APBP)

Jonathon Kass

Co-Chairs
Santa Monica Safe Streets Alliance

Christy Nicholson
So Cal Cycling

Eli Akira Kaufman
Executive Director
BikeLA

Laura M. Hill
Policy Director
Bay Area Council

Janet Byron
President
Berkeley Path Wanderers Association

Jeri Lynch
Co-Chair
So Cal Families for Safe Streets

John Hays
West Hollywood Bicycle Coalition

Eduardo Mendoza
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Livable Communities Initiative

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Lyft, Inc.

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Bahati Foundation

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Tenderloin Traffic Safety Task Force

Kate Robinson
Executive Director
Tenderloin Community Benefit District

Todd David
Abundant San Francisco

Investing in Place

Rosalyn Tonai
National Japanese American
Historical Society

Emily M. Murase, PhD
Executive Director
Japantown Task Force, Inc.

John Yi
Executive Director
Los Angeles Walks

Dave Alexander
Founder
Richmond Family SF

Prashanthi Raman
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South Pas Active Streets

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Policy Counsel
Circulate San Diego

Mario Valadez
Site Coordinator, Alameda County Safe
Routes to Schools Program
TransForm

Individuals:
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Linda Walsh
Lian Chang

Additional cities and organizations that have already sent in letters of support for AB 645:

Alameda-contra Costa Transit District (ac Transit)
Barbary Coast Neighborhood Association
Bay Area Council
Berkeley; City of
Board of Supervisors for The City and County of San Francisco
City of Long Beach
City of Los Angeles
City of Oakland Bicyclist and Pedestrian Advisory Commission
City of San Jose
City of San Jose, Councilmember David Cohen,
City of San Jose, Councilmember Dev Davis
City of San Jose, Councilmember Pam Foley
City of West Hollywood
Culver City Democratic Club
East Bay for Everyone
Glendale Police Department (CO-SPONSOR)
International Union of Operating Engineers, Cal-nevada Conference
Mayor of City & County of San Francisco London Breed
San Jose Police Officer Association
Tenderloin Community Benefit District