

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF MEETING

Tuesday, March 15, 1977

The meeting was called to order in Room #323, Legislative Building at 1:45 p.m. on Tuesday, March 15, 1977.

Senator Richard Blakemore was in the chair.

PRESENT: Senator Richard Blakemore, Chairman
Senator Keith Ashworth, Vice Chairman
Senator C. Clifton Young
Senator Wilbur Faiss
Senator Margie Foote
Senator Joe Neal

ABSENT: Senator William Hernstadt

OTHERS

PRESENT: John Ciardella, Dept. Motor Vehicles, Carson City.
James Lambert, Chief, Nevada Highway Patrol
Daryl E. Capurro, Nevada Motor Transport Assn.
Howard Hill, Dept. Motor Vehicles, Carson City.
George Ciapusci, State Farm Insurance Co.
Virgil Anderson, American Automobile Association.
Robert F. Guinn, Nevada Motor Transport Assn.
John Borda, Office of Traffic Safety.
Grant Bastian, State Highway Engineer
Dennis Tatum, Office of Traffic Safety

The Committee took action on the following bills:

S.B. 309 ADDS TO CODE LETTER AUTHORIZED FOR USE ON
PASSENGER CAR LICENSE PLATES IN CLARK AND WASHOE
COUNTIES.

John Ciardella, Department of Motor Vehicles, testified that S.B. 309 is a department bill designed to expand the code letters in Washoe and Clark Counties as they are seriously exhausted in the present series and propose that the Clark series go from TAA to TZZ which would allow approximately 529,000 more plates to be issued in that series and in Washoe County they be allowed to expand that code from KAA to KZZ which would also allow another 529,000 for Washoe County. Senator Ashworth asked would we still have to get new license plates every

five years to which Mr. Ciardella replied no, they can continue the plates they have out now forever. Senator Ashworth further questioned why it was necessary for the Legislature to handle this rather than give the Department authority to do it by regulation and Mr. Ciardella replied they have submitted bills to go to three letters and three numbers for statewide distribution and ran into problems with the small counties because some of them wished to retain their identity. He added that if they had an inventory of plates ready to send out to the counties it would save the State money.

S.B. 329 EXPANDS TYPES OF RAILROAD CROSSINGS WHICH DRIVERS
OF CERTAIN MOTOR VEHICLES MAY LAWFULLY TRAVERSE

James Lambert, Chief of Nevada Highway Patrol testified he had a problem understanding where the language on page 2, beginning with line 1 "Controlled by a functioning highway traffic control device transmitting a green indication" originated to which Senator Blakemore replied he understood that this applies to one U.S. Air Force crossing in the Nellis area, that the bill came from a Las Vegas trucking outfit that was supposed to send some rationale on it by today but nothing has been received.

S.B 311: REVISES SANCTIONS IMPOSED FOR EXCEEDING NATIONAL
MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT AND LIMITS INSURANCE RATE
INCREASES THEREFOR.

Dennis Tatum, Office of Traffic Safety, testified that upon request of Senator Ashworth he brought a pin map to show the breakdown of rural vs. urban accidents for the past 4 years since our speed limit came into effect. The breakdown of the Washoe County area and the Las Vegas urban area shows there has not been a one percent change from 1973 to 1976. In 1973 38 percent of fatal accidents were in the urban area and the same was true in 1976 so there has been no change as far as fatalities are concerned.

Senator Ashworth stated that points out that a faster speed than 55 miles per hour, perhaps 65 miles an hour, which would be more enforceable, is not going to kill that many more people or use that much more energy.

Mr. Tatum continued that if the speed limit goes up there will be more accidents and more injuries and because of

that the insurance rates are going to go up to which Senator Ashworth replied that the fact that 40 percent of the people driving the highways today are not insured is a larger cause for making insurance rates higher rather than the speed limit. He continued to say he doesn't argue with slowing it down when you get to an urban area but when you are out on a limited access highway there is no reason why you can't drive 65 or 70 miles an hour if you are a good driver.

Senator Young asked how many serious accidents a year would have occurred had we not had the speed limit, any ratio between fatalities and serious accidents and Mr. Tatum replied they are down but there has not been a decrease in injuries and fatalities, there has been a decrease in severity but injuries per se there hasn't been the same decrease as in fatalities.

James Lambert, Chief of Nevada Highway Patrol testified the problem of economics and insurance should not be related to speed limits and safety and added further that he didn't think it was fair, or proper or even straight forward with the populace to pass a bill that will increase the speed limit and do it on a basis where you're trying to hide the real effect, that if the State really wants to increase the speed limit, he feels it should be done openly.

Senator Blakemore, speaking to Mr. Bastian, state the Committee has a suggested amendment as follows: "This act shall not be operative whenever it is determined by the State Highway Board that the provisions of this act will prevent the State of Nevada from receiving any federal funds for highway purposes." (Attached as Exhibit "A").

Mr. Bastian stated he felt there were several problems with the amendment, one, his primary concern is to protect the federal aid highway monies coming to the State because he feels the taxpayers have enough problems in the State without having to face the loss of those funds. He added he also feels in actuality we have roughly a 60 mile an hour speed limit in the State right now. As to the amendment he further stated there is nothing in it that indicates when or what will trigger the effectiveness of Sec. 7, in other words who's responsibility is it going to be to determine when the loss of federal funds are eminent.

The Chairman called for a brief recess.

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The Committee reconvened and considered the following bill:

AJR 13 MEMORIALIZES CONGRESS TO PERMIT STATES TO RAISE
SPEED LIMIT TO AT LEAST 65 MILES PER HOUR OUTSIDE
URBAN AREAS.

Assemblyman Joseph E. Dini, Jr., Speaker, Nevada Legislature, introducer of AJR 13, testified that during his campaign the thing he heard most from the people was that they felt although conservation was necessary, when you have to travel from Fallon to Ely or from Yerington to Tonapah, they reasoned that 65 miles an hour would be a more realistic speed limit outside the urban areas, so therefore, he introduced this resolution to Congress, not to change our law particularly until Congress changes theirs, but to memorialize Congress to change the Federal Act and ours would automatically change with it.

Senator Blakemore stated the Committee would be drawing up an amendment and requested Senator Ashworth to explain why and what the amendment says.

Senator Ashworth said he took this bill back to Washington and that it came within one vote of getting three-fourths of the states to adopt it but their problem was they didn't feel they could persuade Congress, the Federal Government or the Department of Transportation if it just said "outside the rural areas" so the suggestion was, and I think it emanated from here in Nevada, that we limit that line 17 to say: "outside urban areas on limited access highways".

Assemblyman Dini agreed that if the Committee felt the amendment would facilitate the passage of AJR 13 it was acceptable to him, adding that this is a people's bill and if you believe in the people you are representing you should vote this out and they're going to drive 65 miles per hour regardless.

Senator Ashworth made the motion to amend AJR 13 on line 17 to read:

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"outside urban areas on limited access highways."

Senator Faiss seconded the motion.

All members voted "Aye" except
Senator Foote who voted "Nay"

There being no further business the meeting was adjourned at
3:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,



Donna M. Blodgett
Acting Secretary

APPROVED BY:



Senator Richard E. Blakemore, Chairman

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 311

Add a new section which shall read as follows:

Sec. 7. This act shall not be operative whenever it is determined by the State Highway Board that the provisions of this act will prevent the State of Nevada from receiving any federal funds for highway purposes.

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Provided by: The Office of Traffic Safety

The following information concerning an urban/rural breakdown on fatal accidents is provided to the Senate and Assembly Transportation Committees by the Office of Traffic Safety.

	<u>1973</u>	<u>1974</u>	<u>1975</u>	<u>1976</u>
Urban	83 (35%)	59 (32%)	66 (34%)	68 (35%)
Rural	151 (65%)	128 (68%)	127 (66%)	124 (65%)