

S.F. No. 2321 – Traffic Safety Provisions

Author: Senator Jim Carlson

Prepared by: Tim Greenfield, Senate Counsel (651/296-3801)

Date: March 21, 2023

S.F. 2321 modifies various traffic safety provisions, including establishing an advisory council on traffic safety; amends certain traffic regulations; establishes a safety enforcement pilot program; requires reports; and appropriates money.

Article 1 Traffic Safety Policy

Article 1 modifies a variety of traffic safety provisions and establishes advisory groups.

Section 1 [Advisory council on traffic safety] creates an Advisory Council on Traffic Safety which serves as the lead for the state Towards Zero Deaths program. The Council must make recommendations and advise the commissioners of public safety, transportation, and health on the development and implementation of projects intended to improve traffic safety on Minnesotan roads.

Section 2 [Student training] strikes language that allows schools to provide student safety education for bicycling and pedestrian safety. This is replaced by language in **section 3**.

Section 3 [Active transportation safety training] requires public school districts to provide age appropriate active transportation safety training for students in kindergarten through eighth grade. Nonpublic schools may provide the same training. The commissioner of transportation must maintain a comprehensive collection of training safety materials.

Section 4 [Safe road zones] establishes a process for the designation of safe road zones. Provides authority to MnDOT to designate a street or highway segment a safe road zone following the request of a local official. Implements a variety of safety and educational outreach and measures. Directs the commissioner of public safety to coordinate with local law enforcement for enhanced traffic enforcement in safe road zones. Requires MnDOT to maintain a website on safe road zone implementation and designations.

Section 5 [Speed limits in safe road zones] authorizes MnDOT to set a temporary or permanent speed limit on roads in a safe road zone.

Section 6 [Passing] makes technical changes to modernize the passing requirements and establishes clearance requirements for when a driver is passing a bicycle. Requires clearance when passing a bicycle of the greater of three feet or half of the passing vehicle's width, unless passing in a separate lane.

Section 7 [Riding rules] amends rules on operating a bicycle and adds a riding rule permitting a bicyclist to proceed straight through an intersection from the left side of a right-hand turn lane.

Section 8 [Prohibition on use; penalty] amends the prohibition on using a wireless communication device to include a prohibition on holding the wireless communication device with one or both hands.

Section 9 [Exception] makes a conforming change to the changes made in **section 8**.

Section 10 [Traffic safety report] requires the commissioner of public safety to submit a traffic safety report to the legislature and requires the commissioner to work with the Advisory Council on Traffic Safety in preparing the report. The report must analyze the safety of Minnesota's roads and transportation system and is due annually on January 2.

Section 11 [Speed violation disposition analysis] directs the Office of the Legislative Auditor to analyze and review traffic citation enforcement activity and disposition changes over recent years.

Section 12 [Safety enforcement pilot program] authorizes a pilot program for speed enforcement using cameras in work zones and high-risk pedestrian zones.

Subdivision 1 defines terms.

Subdivision 2 authorizes the commissioners of transportation and public safety to implement speed enforcement through speed safety cameras in specified locations.

Subdivision 3 establishes general requirements for the pilot program, including operations schedules, minimum locations, and the posting of training, inspection, and signage requirements on MnDOT's website.

Subdivision 4 authorizes law enforcement to allow for the issuance of speeding citations based on speed camera enforcement to the owner or lessee of a motor vehicle after law enforcement reviews and certifies the images produced by the speed camera system. Requires use of the speed camera system only within a work zone or a high-risk pedestrian zone.

Subdivision 5 allows the commissioner of MnDOT to enter into agreements with a private entity to administer the speed camera safety system. Prohibits payment to a private entity based on number of violations or citations issued.

Subdivision 6 requires MnDOT and the Department of Public Safety to consult with certain entities when designing and implementing the safety enforcement pilot program.

Subdivision 7 provides for data practices relating to speed safety cameras.

Subdivision 8 provides timelines and conditions for destruction of speed safety camera data.

Subdivision 9 prevents some driving record exemptions from commercial driver's license holders issued a citation under the pilot program.

Subdivision 10 directs MnDOT and DPS to establish an independent review of the safety enforcement pilot program under certain specifications and requires a report to the legislature on the pilot program's effectiveness and whether it reduced traffic crashes, injuries and fatalities.

Subdivision 11 provides the pilot program's expiration date of February 1, 2026.

Section 13 [Legislative report; speed safety cameras] requires a legislative report on speed safety camera policies, which is due by February 1, 2026. Specifies report contents to require information on results from the pilot program under **section 12** of this article.

Article 2 Appropriations

Contains a variety of appropriations related to provisions in **article 1** and appropriations for other initiatives including enhanced traffic safety enforcement and speed reduction efforts on rural high-risk roadways.