

Testimony of Alex Schieferdecker

Chair Dibble and members of the committee,

I am a resident of Minneapolis (District 62A), an AICP certified transportation planner, and a bicycle commuter. I have both professional and personal experience in dealing with unsafe roadways, and that is why I am writing in favor of SF2026.

Since the onset of the pandemic, there has been a noticeable increase in unsafe driving. One of the most unsafe driving behaviors is speeding. When you speed, you have less time to react to unexpected circumstances and you do more damage with your car when you make a mistake. The rate of injury and death in car crashes is directly linked to the speed of the vehicle(s) involved.

When it comes to reducing damage, injury, and death on our roads, planners and engineers think in terms of “three E’s.” They are: Engineering, Education, and Enforcement. I have been thrilled to see the work that the City of Minneapolis and Hennepin County have put into the first two of these E’s. But their hands have been tied when it comes to the third.

Traditional traffic enforcement has been done by police. Police officers are human. They make mistakes, can pull over only one car at a time, and cannot be at their posts 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Moreover, they often have better things to do.

There is a better way to enforce traffic laws and that way is cameras. Cameras have a negligible rate of error, catch all violators, and are always on duty. They are proven to reduce property damage, injuries, and deaths in the cities where they are used. Through the use of speed cameras, we can encourage a safer driving culture on all streets.

In February, I attended a town hall where Minneapolis staff discussed their proposed speed camera pilot. I was impressed by the sensitivity that they showed to common objections to these programs and the thoughtful way in which this bill puts guardrails around potential pilot programs to ensure privacy and equity. I believe that this legislation and this idea is fully baked and ready for implementation in Minnesota.

I urge that the committee support this important legislation.