Date:
From:

Dear MSP,

**THE SCOTTISH PARLIAMENT, RESTRICTED ROADS (20 mph SPEED LIMIT) BILL**

I am writing to you with regards to the 20mph Bill currently going through Parliament, to lend my support, and to ask that you might do the same. Evidence overwhelmingly shows that lives can be saved by the reduction in the speed limit to 20mph. See here for the facts: https://www.gobike.org/cycling-info/evidence/20-mph. A slower traffic environment has been proven to not only reduce the incidences of death and injuries to pedestrians, but it also improves the environment for people choosing active travel such as cycling. In addition to that, pollution and congestion is also reduced, and there are associated economic benefits as outlined below.

As part of this we are quite clear that we need a 20 mph default speed limit in our urban areas. The reasons for a 20 mph default speed limit include:

1. **Consistency from town to town across Scotland**. Drivers will expect to drive at 20 not 30mph unless there is signage that allows them to drive at speeds in excess of 20mph.
2. **Consistency within towns.** Drivers will expect to drive at 20mph unless there is signage that allows them to drive at speeds in excess of this. Currently there is a lack of consistency, with some proactive communities aiming to protect their schools and their local residential areas with a 20mph limit. There is an increasing number of city areas where local authorities are imposing a 20mph limit to make places more people-friendly and to encourage active travel.
3. **Reduction in signage.** As urban speeds go up and down there is signage at each change in speed and this will be reduced if the default speed is 20mph. Local communities will see the benefits of a lower speed limit and will resist moves to increase a limit to 30mph.
4. **Reduction in pollution.** As motor traffic moves at a lower, but importantly, more consistent speed, vehicle emissions will be reduced as there is less requirement to accelerate away from traffic lights. See link, (a), below
5. **Reduced danger to pedestrians.** It is widely recognised that a vehicle travelling at 20mph is less likely to kill or seriously injure a pedestrian with whom it collides, than if it is travelling at 30mph or more.
6. **An improved environment for cycling.** The speed differential between a motor vehicle and a bicycle is reduced from a factor of 3 or 4 to a factor of 2 or less. Bicycles can regularly travel at 10-12mph and more people will feel confident of cycling on roads alongside motor traffic moving at no more than 20mph.
7. **A reduction in motor traffic within towns.** Drivers will tend to use the outer ring roads where speed limits are 30mph or higher rather than a more direct route through an urban centre.
8. **A reduction in congestion.** This would come as more drivers avoid urban centres and those who do travel within urban areas move at a more consistent speed, with less need to overtake etc.
9. **Improved compliance, monitoring and enforcement of the speed limit.** A consistent

speed limit of 20mph, rather than one that changes across an urban area, will encourage compliance by drivers and ease any monitoring and compliance to be done by the authorities. See note (b) below.

10. **Reduction in the requirement for "traffic calming".** Local authorities are finding it necessary to install traffic calming measures, usually speed tables or cushions, to reduce motor traffic speeds to no more than 20mph. This expensive practice will not be so regularly required with a default speed of 20mph (Note that traffic calming can cost in the region of £60k vs £1k per km for speed limit signage).

(a) this contribution to the Guardian newspaper (https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2010/apr/19/ask-leo-20mph-speed-limits-pollution) provides interesting reading, including this quote:
*"Research in Germany has shown that the greater the speed of vehicles in built-up areas, the higher is the incidence of acceleration, deceleration, and braking, all of which increase air pollution. German research indicates that traffic calming reduces idle times by 15%, gear changing by 12%, brake use by 14%, and gasoline use by 12% (Newman and Kenworthy 1992, 39–40). This slower and calmer style of driving reduces emissions, as demonstrated by an evaluation in Buxtehude, Germany. Table E-1 shows the relative change in emissions and fuel use when the speed limit is cut from 50kmh (31mph) to 30kmh (19mph) for two different driving styles. Even aggressive driving under the slower speed limit produces lower emissions (but higher fuel use) than under the higher speed limit, although calm driving produces greater reductions for most emissions and net fuel savings (Newman and Kenworthy 1992, 39 –40)."*
The AA have carried out tests, ( http://www.theaa.com/public_affairs/news/20mph-roads-emissions.html ) to support a view that lower speed limits raise fuel consumption and hence pollution, although there is no mention of the reduced acceleration and braking when driving at a steady speed of 20mph. However the overriding concerns should be to reduce the severity of accidents and to encourage the switch to active travel. This article, "Speed reduction methods to promote road safety and save lives https://making-traffic-safer.com/speed-reduction-methods-promote-road-safety-save-lives/ " gives a good summary of what can be done.

(b) Enforcement is an issue, as it is with ALL speed limits, from 20 - 70, but, like smoking and drink driving, the public mood must change. However, some enforcement will be needed and, given the other benefits – fewer and less-severe accidents, for example, Police Scotland and/or our Local Authorities should be funded accordingly.

I trust that you will consider my points and that the evidence into account when deliberating on the Bill and that you will help work to ensure that the urban areas of Scotland are healthy, active areas where young and old and all those in between can live life to the full.

Yours sincerely