

SCHOOL ZONE SPEED LIMITS

- WHEREAS, The safety of Missouri schoolchildren is of paramount importance and concern; and
- WHEREAS, Many Missouri schoolchildren walk or ride bicycles to school daily when school is in session placing them at risk as they cross or walk along streets or roadways adjacent to or near their schools; and
- WHEREAS, Slower speeds give drivers more time to react to children who may suddenly enter the lane(s) of traffic; and
- WHEREAS, A reduction of vehicle speed from 30 mph to 20 mph cuts the distance required for stopping by 50 percent, with a reduction of vehicle speed from 25 mph to 20 mph cutting stopping distance by 29 percent; and
- WHEREAS, Slower speeds dramatically decrease the severity of vehicle-pedestrian or vehicle-bicyclist accidents, as evidenced by statistics showing that while 80 percent of pedestrians hit by vehicles traveling at 40 mph die, 40 percent hit at 30 mph die, and 20 percent hit at 25 mph die, a lesser, albeit still-tragic and heartbreaking, 5 percent of pedestrians hit by vehicles traveling 20 mph die; and
- WHEREAS, Marking and speed regulation of streets adjacent to schools in Missouri lack uniformity with some school zone speed limits of 20 mph, others 25 mph and many with no special markings at all, causing drivers not to know what to expect in school zones; and
- WHEREAS, Most other states have set statewide uniform speed limits of 20 mph, or even 15 mph, with great care taken to ensure uniformity of speed, signage, warning lights, street striping and the like under the belief that such uniformity greatly improves driver compliance; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED, That Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, its councils and units, support legislation establishing a statewide, standard school zone speed limit of 20 mph to be in effect during those times thirty minutes before, during and thirty minutes after the periods of time when students are arriving at a regularly scheduled school session and leaving a regularly scheduled school session, with discretion given the governing body of a county or municipality to establish a speed limit within a school zone lower than 20 mph if it finds, in conjunction with the board of education, that a lower limit is needed to promote public safety and protect the lives of children, and further discretion given said governing body in conjunction with the board of education to extend the hours in effect for the school zone speed limit as needed to promote public safety and protect the lives of children; and be it further
- RESOLVED, That Missouri Congress of Parents and Teachers, its councils and units, support legislation stiffening the penalties for speeding through school zones, and imposing harsh penalties when a child is struck and injured by a vehicle in a posted school zone, when the vehicle is speeding or being operated recklessly or negligently, or when the collision is intentional.