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February 13, 2018

The Honorable Brian Dahle  
Capitol Office, Room 3104  
PO Box 942849  
Sacramento, CA 94249-0001

Re: US 395 Speed Limit

Dear Assemblymember Dahle,

Caltrans is circulating its draft United States Route 395 Transportation Concept Report (TCR) for the portion of US 395 within Lassen, Modoc, and Sierra Counties. The report contains a summary of comments made by your constituents and ours about how the State of California should be addressing the greatest needs within the route. We greatly appreciate this work by Caltrans to better understand and develop steps to improve US 395 for our fellow Californians and visitors to the State.

At local public workshops, community members gave input about a significant safety issue needing immediate attention by Caltrans. The issue is concerning the differential speed limits of truck and passenger vehicles traveling in a 50-mile two-lane segment of the route from Hallelujah Junction to the State Route 36 junction. The differential speed limit is when traffic must adhere to different maximum speed limits. In this segment of roadway, the maximum speed limit is 55 miles per hour for trucks and 65 miles per hour for passenger cars. This issue is resulting in traffic backups behind trucks, increased demand for passing toward oncoming traffic, and consequently drivers dangerously violating passing laws.

Caltrans has identified this two-lane route with factors that support upgrading this portion to a four-lane divided expressway. Such an improvement would certainly resolve the differential speed limit issue, however, the key challenges to implementation is that it will take multiple decades of study and millions of dollars of funding that is not available.

There is another option that is encouraging enough to merit further investigation by the State. According to the report, a possible interim measure would be for the State to consider implementing a universal speed limit (USL) along this segment of US 395. The report discusses some studies having "findings are either neutral or somewhat suggest support for a USL."

Caltrans should consider the USL option immediately. Perhaps a legislative fix is needed to consider the USL option because of California Vehicle Code Section 22406 that has set highway vehicle maximum speed of 55 miles per hour for trucks.

Nevertheless, we respectfully urge State action this year to investigate and implement a universal speed limit from Hallelujah Junction to the State Route 36 junction.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue.

Sincerely,

CHRIS GALLAGHER, Chairman  
Lassen County Board of Supervisors

cf: State Senator Ted Gaines  
City of Susanville City Council  
Lassen County Transportation Commission  
Lassen County Transit Services Agency  
Mr. Dave Moore, Director, Caltrans District 2  
Mr. Scott White, Chief, Caltrans District 2 Office of System Planning



## VEHICLE CODE - VEH

### **DIVISION 11. RULES OF THE ROAD [21000 - 23336]** ( *Division 11 enacted by Stats. 1959, Ch. 3.* )

#### **CHAPTER 7. Speed Laws [22348 - 22413]** ( *Chapter 7 enacted by Stats. 1959, Ch. 3.* )

#### **ARTICLE 2. Other Speed Laws [22400 - 22413]** ( *Article 2 enacted by Stats. 1959, Ch. 3.* )

No person may drive any of the following vehicles on a highway at a speed in excess of 55 miles per hour:

- 22406.** (a) A motortruck or truck tractor having three or more axles or any motortruck or truck tractor drawing any other vehicle.
- (b) A passenger vehicle or bus drawing any other vehicle.
- (c) A schoolbus transporting any school pupil.
- (d) A farm labor vehicle when transporting passengers.
- (e) A vehicle transporting explosives.
- (f) A trailer bus, as defined in Section 636.

*(Amended by Stats. 2000, Ch. 787, Sec. 22. Effective January 1, 2001.)*