

Senate File 378 - Introduced

SENATE FILE 378
BY COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

(SUCCESSOR TO SF 73)

A BILL FOR

1 An Act relating to the default speed limit for all vehicular
2 traffic, and making penalties applicable.

3 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF IOWA:

unofficial

1 Section 1. Section 321.285, subsection 3, Code 2025, is
2 amended to read as follows:

3 3. Unless otherwise provided in this section or by other
4 speed restrictions, the speed limit for all vehicular traffic
5 shall be ~~fifty-five~~ sixty miles per hour.

6 Sec. 2. IMPLEMENTATION. Notwithstanding section 321.252,
7 321.255, 321.285, or any other provision of law to the contrary,
8 when updating speed limit signs as a result of the enactment of
9 this Act, the agency that exercises jurisdiction over a highway
10 for which the speed limit increased may attach nonpermanent
11 overlays or stickers approved by the department of transportation
12 to existing speed limit signs in order to display the new speed
13 limit. The nonpermanent overlays or stickers may be used by
14 the applicable agency until the applicable speed limit sign
15 is replaced based on the agency's replacement schedule and any
16 applicable specifications or requirements.

17 EXPLANATION

18 The inclusion of this explanation does not constitute agreement with
19 the explanation's substance by the members of the general assembly.

20 Under current law, the default speed limit for all vehicular
21 traffic is 55 miles per hour (MPH) unless otherwise provided.
22 A speed limit is provided for streets or highways on which
23 a cattle guard is installed (15 MPH), business districts (20
24 MPH), residential or school districts (25 MPH), state parks
25 and preserves (35 MPH), suburban districts (45 MPH), board of
26 regents institution roads (45 MPH), unpaved secondary roads (55
27 MPH between sunrise and sunset and 50 MPH between sunset and
28 sunrise), fully controlled-access, divided, multilaned highways
29 (65 MPH), certain divided multilaned highways that are not
30 fully access-controlled, if selected by the department of
31 transportation (DOT) (65 MPH), and highways that are part of
32 the interstate road system (70 MPH). In addition, the agency
33 responsible for a highway is authorized to establish a lower
34 reasonable and proper speed limit on the highway under certain
35 circumstances and is required to erect signage giving notice of

1 the limit.

2 This bill increases the default speed limit for all vehicular
3 traffic to 60 MPH.

4 The bill does not increase the speed limit range for which
5 the DOT is prohibited from considering the first two excessive
6 speed violations (10 MPH or less on a highway with a speed
7 limit between 34 MPH and 56 MPH) within a 12-month period for
8 purposes of suspending a driver's license (Code section 321.210)
9 or while a person is operating a motor vehicle during a license
10 probationary period (Code section 321.210C). The bill also does
11 not increase the 55 MPH minimum speed limit a local authority is
12 authorized to provide for by ordinance (Code section 321.293).

13 The bill authorizes the agency that exercises jurisdiction
14 over a highway for which the speed limit increased, when updating
15 speed limit signs as a result of the bill, to attach nonpermanent
16 overlays or stickers approved by the DOT to existing speed limit
17 signs in order to display the new speed limit. The nonpermanent
18 overlays or stickers may be used by the applicable agency
19 until the applicable speed limit sign is replaced based on the
20 agency's replacement schedule and any applicable specifications
21 or requirements.

22 Pursuant to current law, a person who operates a motor vehicle
23 in excess of the speed limit commits a simple misdemeanor
24 punishable by a scheduled fine that varies depending on the
25 excessive speed. The fine ranges from \$30 for a speed in excess
26 of the limit by not more than 5 MPH to \$135 plus \$5 for each
27 MPH of excessive speed over 20 MPH over the limit, with increased
28 fines for violations in road work zones.