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To: Senator Wiener  
To: California Senate Transportation Committee Members  
February 12, 2024

Re: SB 961, (Wiener) – OPPOSE

Dear Members of the Senate Transportation Committee,

ABATE of California is firmly resolved to OPPOSE SB 961 which will require new vehicles to be equipped with speed governors starting in model year 2027.

ABATE is a membership based 501 (c) 4, motor vehicle rights organization, representing a statewide voter bloc of 3.6 million.

This bill requires both side and rear guards on large trucks and restricting speed on all passenger vehicles in an apparent attempt to reduce accidents through state mandated measures, including new inspection rules which if not followed would be punished as a crime.

This bill applies to ALL passenger vehicles which, as outlined in California CA Code, Veh Code 465 includes ANY motor vehicle, other than a motortruck, truck tractor or a bus. Thus, including motorcycles and any other motor vehicle that can carry a passenger.

The author believes that restricting vehicle speeds through technology is going to prevent accidents or deaths. The author presents no studies or facts to support this notion. The technology used puts riders and drivers at risk against vehicles older than 2027 who have no speed limiting requirement. Driverless vehicles and vehicles in autonomous mode already adhere to posted speeds. Vehicles with this technology will not be able to accelerate beyond the restricted speeds to pass other motor vehicles, especially vehicles older than 2027 nor avoid collisions with other vehicles during crash situations.

Laws are already in place to punish violators of posted speed limits. These violations provide revenue to the cities, counties and the state which funds traffic courts and law enforcement. If vehicle speeds are controlled, there are less tickets issued and less need for court appearances or law enforcement officers. The bill would also set a precedent for physically restricting travel (speed) for citizens which will surely generate controversy and legal arguments. It is sure to create public outrage that will question supporting legislators going through re-election.

Bare in mind that these restrictions will impact everyone except law enforcement and first responders. This means all licensed riders and drivers of passenger vehicles will be affected which represent the largest voting bloc in the country. The bill makes violations of the new rear and side guards and inspection processes for large trucks a crime, not an infraction. By creating a new criminal offense, this bill would impose a state-mandate, adding financial costs to the state.

ABATE of California strongly OPPOSE SB 961 and we urge you to vote AGAINST passing this bill out of the Senate Transportation Committee.

Sincerely,

Robert Tabaldo

Director - Legislative, Regulatory and Political Action Committee

ABATE OF CALIFORNIA