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134th General Assembly

Bill Analysis

Version: As Introduced

Primary Sponsor: Rep. Ingram

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SUMMARY

- Authorizes a municipal corporation to request the local county engineer to conduct the engineering study that current law requires when requesting that the Director of Transportation lower the speed limit on a highway within that municipal corporation.
- Requires the Director to base the Director's determination of whether to lower a speed limit on a highway within the municipal corporation on that county engineer's study.

DETAILED ANALYSIS

Altering speed limits within municipal corporations

Background

In general, speed limits throughout Ohio are set by statute, based on the character of the highway. The Director of Transportation, however, has the general authority to alter (either lower or raise) the speed limit on any highway in the state, based on criteria established through an engineering study (as defined by the Director). A local authority (for example, a municipal corporation) typically may not unilaterally change the speed limits on highways within its jurisdiction, but it may request that the Director lower or raise the speed limit for those highways.¹

In order to request that the Director lower the speed limit, the local authority must determine that the current speed limit is greater than is reasonable or safe, based on the

¹ R.C. 4511.21(H), (I), (J), and (L). There are limited exceptions in which a local authority may raise a speed limit or for a township to change a speed limit without prior approval. R.C. 4511.21(J) and (K). See "[Speed Zones on Local Roadways](#)" found on the Ohio Department of Transportation website for more information regarding changing statutory speed limits.

criteria of an engineering study (paid for by that local authority). If so determined, the local authority may adopt a resolution requesting that the Director declare a reasonable and safe prima-facie speed limit for that location. If the Director decides to grant the local authority's request, the new speed becomes effective once signs are erected notifying the travelling public of the new speed.²

County engineer involvement

The bill authorizes a municipal corporation to request the local county engineer to perform the engineering study that is required prior to requesting the Director to lower a speed limit on a highway within the municipal corporation. If so requested, and if the county engineer conducts the study, the Director must base the Director's determination regarding a reasonable and safe speed limit for the highway on the county engineer's study.³ The bill does not *require* a county engineer to conduct the study if a municipal corporation makes the request. It also does not specify whether the municipal corporation or the county is responsible for the payment of that study when conducted by the county engineer.

HISTORY

Action	Date
Introduced	05-12-22

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² R.C. 4511.21(l)(1) and (2).

³ R.C. 4511.21(l)(3).