

Senate Judiciary Committee

Jessica Bourque 271-2104

SB 618-FN, relative to the penalties for repeat speeding offenders.

Hearing Date: January 15, 2026

Time Opened: 1:15 p.m.

Time Closed: 1:47 p.m.

Members of the Committee Present: Senators Gannon, Abbas, Carson, Altschiller and Reardon

Members of the Committee Absent : None

Bill Analysis: This bill allows for the department of safety and courts to require drivers to install a device that uses GPS to actively limit the vehicle's speed to posted or preset speed limits, following certain offenses related to speeding.

Sponsors:

Sen. Ricciardi

Sen. Fenton

Sen. Watters

Sen. Long

Sen. Birdsell

Sen. Perkins Kwoka

Rep. Rhodes

Rep. Crawford

Who supports the bill: Senator Denise Ricciardi, Senator Donovan Fenton, Paul Susca (BWANH), Gary Catapano, Kevin Criscione, Jeff Rogers, Tom Baron, Amy Cohen, David Jenkins,

Who opposes the bill: Julie Smith, Daniel Richardson, Simon Berrio

Summary of testimony presented:

Senator Ricciardi, Prime Sponsor

- Speeding is a serious issue that we, as public officials, need to address.
- Extreme and repeated speeding is one of the most dangerous threats on our roadways.
- Speeding continues to be an increasing problem, not something that's getting better.
- The Governor's Special Task Force on Highway Safety reports that New Hampshire has experienced a 230% increase in vehicles traveling over 100 miles per hour since 2018.
- Speeding is the main cause of approximately 30,000 crashes across NH, and traffic deaths rose nearly 50% from 2019 to 2022 despite an overall decrease in crashes.

- Our existing policy tools are failing to prevent the most dangerous drivers. The penalties we have now, like fines and license suspensions, aren't working because fines are paid and people ignore their license suspensions.
- This bill is intentionally aimed at a small, high-risk group that has already shown an unwillingness to drive responsibly, not citizens who occasionally exceed the speed limit.
- Senator Ricciardi proposed placing this bill under interim study, as she believes it isn't ready yet. She thinks the Traffic Safety Commission should examine the issue more thoroughly and then provide recommendations. After that, a bill should be introduced that reflects those recommendations.
- The Traffic Safety Commission can review what has worked and what hasn't in other states, analyze various data to clearly identify what is needed to reduce speeding, increase penalties, and prevent unintended consequences of a bill passed before it is ready.

Senator Abbas asked about the term “excessive speeding” on line 14 and inquired whether there is already a legal definition for that term.

Senator Ricciardi explained that she recommends sending this bill to Interim Study because it involves a significant amount of data analysis and requires clear definitions of key terms.

Jeff Rogers, Safe Streets and Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire

- Supports this bill.
- Mr. Rogers was in a nearly fatal crash in 2015. The accident occurred on a road in Manchester known for frequent speeding. He suffered severe injuries, including fractures to his skull, wrist, and pelvis. His condition was so dire that doctors and family members were not sure he would survive the weekend.
- The accident resulted in five weeks in the hospital and six months off work, forcing his employer to scramble to cover his duties and costing nearly half a million dollars in hospital expenses.
- Believes this bill would make roads and streets safer for everyone, which will make our state a better place to live and a more reliable place to do business.

Paul Susca, Bike-Walk Alliance of New Hampshire

- The current tools used by law enforcement are ineffective.
- Passing this bill would give law enforcement additional tools to safeguard the public from the worst offenders.
- There appears to be a negative reaction on social media to this bill, but those responses seem to come from people who don't understand the bill.
- This bill targets the most serious offenders.
- The Intentional Speed Assist device has been used commercially for many years and is a proven tool.

Gary Catapano, Safety First Consulting

- Has spent 35 years in the professional safety industry, working with federal transportation agencies, fleets and municipalities; 4 years at the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) during the Obama administration as an advisor; and the last 10 years studying speeding.
- We will see more and more blatant acts of speeding.
- During the pandemic, as quarantine measures reduced traffic, we observed a notable rise in speeding in New York City due to decreased road congestion.
- Speeding is a unique behavior because its consequences are reinforced in a counterintuitive way. The positive reinforcement from the outcomes is what drives this behavior.
- There are 3 different reasons people speed:
 - By accident or mistake, folks who might have a new car or are inexperienced.
 - Folks who have lost their appreciation of how risky speeding is.
 - People who willfully speed in an egregious manner most of the time.
- ISA devices remind people to slow down once they hit a certain speed.
- Even drivers who have a good record speed 30-35% of the time.
- ISA devices reduced drivers' speed by 97%.
- If someone is convicted of reckless driving, this could be installed on their vehicle to prevent them from speeding.

Senator Carson asked Mr. Catapano about the data he has collected on trends among various age groups and asked whether one specific age group tends to have the highest number of speeding violations.

Mr. Catapano stated that it's usually younger, teenage drivers with less experience who don't understand the consequences. There are also trends among drivers who are typically male, aged 25 to 44. However, it depends on the data you're looking at. Data can vary slightly, but generally, those are the age groups.

Senator Carson followed up, noting that in NH there is a graduated license system. At age 16, drivers receive a conditional license with restrictions. Do you think it would be appropriate to tell a 16-year-old, "If you do this, you will lose your license until the age of 21"?

Mr. Catapano explained that immediate, certain consequences have the strongest influence on behavior, while uncertain or future consequences have less impact. For instance, if someone received a speeding ticket or caused a crash every time they drove, we wouldn't face this problem. But law enforcement can't spend all their time issuing speeding tickets. Some individuals have problematic personalities, and that is who this bill aims to target.

Senator Carson stated that she lives near Route 93 and often travels to Concord on it. Although it's winter now, she expects speeding to increase again come March, especially on long straightaways where young people frequently race, unaware of the danger they pose to others. Senator Carson acknowledged that law enforcement cannot

be everywhere, and even if another driver reports speeding, the offenders are usually gone by the time officers arrive. Many of these speeders are from Massachusetts. Her question is whether he believes stricter penalties should be imposed on those racing on the highway.

Mr. Catapano said that excessive speed to him is more than 10 miles an hour over the limit, and egregious speeding would be 25 or more. He would love to see young people receive training on simulators or similar tools so they can see the consequences.

Senator Carson asked whether he thinks it would be important to include additional training for young people in driver's education.

Mr. Catapano said he believes it would be a positive step, especially if it could be done using modern technology. Unfortunately, funding for these kinds of programs have been cut over the years, but they were highly effective.

Senator Abbas said he understands excessive speeding, but we already have a habitual offender law that includes speeding, and asked if Mr. Catapano has any thoughts on how many minor speeding offences someone would have to have to fall into this category?

Mr. Catapano said that in many cases, excessive speeding is intentional. Relying only on laws to stop speeding isn't enough; more tickets, automated enforcement, or other programs like this one should be added. Increased funding for law enforcement could enable officers to conduct high-visibility operations.

Senator Abbas said he is discussing minor speeding offenses and how many offenses would be appropriate before they fall under this program. Senator Abbas said he is thinking three.

Mr. Catapano said that it is a tough question. Individuals who don't wear seat belts tend to be risk-takers. NYC has 2,000 cameras within 2 miles of speed zones and if you get ticketed within those zones, it is a \$50 fine. Some people have been caught up to 250 times, which suggests there is little to no deterrence. We must figure out how to use technology.

Kevin Chriscione, Goffstown resident

- Supports the bill.
- His perspective is from pedestrians; he lived on the West Side of Manchester and experienced many close calls.
- When people asked him about living in Manchester, he always said the real danger is speeding cars, not crime.
- NH experienced 14 murders but 135 traffic fatalities in 2024.
- Police can't be everywhere all at once.
- There should be consequences for speeders.

- We need to question why we keep permitting people to repeatedly break the law and endanger others.

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Date Hearing Report completed: January 19, 2026