



OFFICERS

President

James Gore
Sonoma County

1st Vice President

Ed Valenzuela
Siskiyou County

2nd Vice President

Chuck Washington
Riverside County

Past President

Lisa A. Bartlett
Orange County



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Graham Knaus

September 13, 2021

The Honorable Gavin Newsom
Governor, State of California
State Capitol, First Floor
Sacramento, CA 95814

**RE: AB 43 (Friedman): Traffic Safety
Ordered to Engrossing and Enrolling – September 9, 2021 – Request for
Signature**

Dear Governor Newsom:

The California State Association of Counties (CSAC) respectfully requests your signature on AB 43, which would grant the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) and local authorities greater flexibility in setting speed limits based on recommendations included in the January 2020 report prepared by the California State Transportation Agency's (CalSTA) Zero Traffic Fatalities Task Force (Task Force).

CalSTA's report was developed and published pursuant to AB 2363, which Assemblymember Friedman authored in 2018. As noted in the Task Force report, research shows that higher speed limits lead to greater traffic-related fatalities and injuries. However, most speed limits across California are currently set based on the 85th percentile speed, or the speed at which 85 percent of the traffic travels at or below. This methodology is based on the speed at which drivers feel comfortable driving and does not account for safety-related factors. AB 43 would grant local governments flexibility in setting lower speed limits on high-injury streets and in areas with high concentrations of bicycles and pedestrians.

CSAC supports efforts to reduce traffic-related fatalities and injuries by promoting vehicle, pedestrian, and bicycle safety, and AB 43 would allow local agencies to set speed limits based on safety-related factors and contribute to a reduction in traffic-related injuries and fatalities. Combining the increased flexibility for setting speed limits offered by AB 43 with continued and increased funding for programs that support safe access for all local roadway users will help California change its trajectory on road safety and move toward zero deaths.

To address higher rates of injuries and deaths on county roads, as compared to other facilities, CSAC has consistently advocated for additional funding to support evidence-based infrastructure improvements that reduce the severity and frequency of collisions through the [Local Highway Safety Improvement Program](#). Moreover, using

flexible Road Maintenance and Rehabilitation Account funding from SB 1 (Beall, 2017), cities and counties have completed over 1,450 local projects that included bicycle or pedestrian components during the first three fiscal years of funding.

For these reasons, CSAC respectfully requests your signature on AB 43. If you need additional information about our position, please contact me at (916) 650-8180 or clee@counties.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Chitzy", written in a cursive style.

Christopher Lee
Legislative Representative

cc: The Honorable Laura Friedman, Member, California State Assembly
Ronda Paschal, Deputy Legislative Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom
Mark Tollefson, Deputy Cabinet Secretary, Office of Governor Newsom