



WalkBoston

## Fact Sheet

### **Speed Limits On Local Roads In Urban Districts H.3643 An Act Relative to Speed Limits**

#### **The problem: Pedestrian safety requires lower speed limits**

- Dense urban communities benefit from greater numbers of pedestrians, and pedestrian safety relies on safe vehicle speeds.
- Fatalities from pedestrian-automobile crashes are directly related to speed: 90% of pedestrians hit by cars die when struck at 40 mph compared to 5% at 20 mph.
- School children and elderly people are among those who walk more.

#### **Need for legislation in Massachusetts**

- Speed limits on local roads are too high for densely populated areas.
- Reducing prevailing speeds on local roads to 25 mph in urban districts in all Massachusetts communities is important for pedestrian, cyclist, and community safety.

#### **Bill summary**

- Establishes speed limit of 25 mph in urban districts on local roads
- Defines “urban district” as “the territory contiguous to local roads which is built up with structures devoted to business or the territory contiguous to any functionally classified local road where the dwelling houses are situated at such distances as will average less than 100 feet between them for a distance of 1/8 mile or over.”
- Retains methods by which speed limits are set in collaboration with the Massachusetts Highway Department.

#### **Other States’ Speed Limits**

- Maximum of 25 mph in business or residential districts: Arizona, California, Delaware, Georgia, Maine, New Jersey, Rhode Island, Virginia.
- Maximum of 25 mph on city or town streets – Wisconsin, Washington.
- Maximum of 20 mph in business district, 25 mph in residential district – Oregon.
- Maximum of 25 mph in urban districts: Montana, Utah.
- Maximum of 15 mph at school crossing and/or school zones – Arizona, Tennessee, Delaware, Oregon, Rhode Island, Utah.
- Maximum of 15 mph for vehicles passing school during recess or when students are going to or leaving school – Maine, Wisconsin.