



**Testimony from the DC chapter of Families for Safe Streets
for various FY27 budget hearings
held in April and May 2026**

To the members of the DC Council:

The [DC chapter of Families for Safe Streets](#) is submitting written testimony to the agencies that have a critical role in keeping people safe while traveling in the District. This is a deliberate decision because the way someone chooses to move is not confined to one specific committee or agency's responsibility. We also want to convey our priorities holistically and underscore how each agency's role is connected with responsibilities from other agencies.

As of April 25, 2026, traffic fatalities are unfortunately above the last three-years-to-date average and higher than the same period last year, even as the number of major injuries declines. See screenshots from the [DC Vision Zero dashboard](#) below. The safety measures that the Council previously enacted are working, but we cannot be complacent or accept more deaths. We urge the Council to continue to invest in safety for all road users in the District of Columbia.

DC Vision Zero Traffic Fatalities and Injuries

'26 vs '23-'25 YTD Avg '26 vs '25 YTD

- As of 04/25/26 there have been 16 fatalities among all road users in 2026, 3.0 more (23% ▲) compared to the last three-years-to-date average.
- As of 04/25/26 there have been 76 major injuries among all road users in 2026, 28.7 fewer (-27% ▼) compared to the last three-years-to-date average.

'26 vs '23-'25 YTD Avg '26 vs '25 YTD

- As of 04/25/26 there have been 16 fatalities among all road users in 2026, 10 more (167% ▲) compared to the same period in 2025.
- As of 04/25/26 there have been 76 major injuries among all road users in 2026, 7 fewer (-8% ▼) compared to the same period in 2025.

Don't delay implementation of the intelligent speed assistance (ISA) program

ISA for Super Speeders:

The District of Columbia led the way and passed the STEER Act, which created the first law in the country to stop super speeders (i.e., repeat reckless offenders or recidivists) by requiring the installation of an active intelligent speed assistance device. This still gives people the ability to drive, but uses GPS technology to prevent them from going above the speed limit. DC was the first, but soon followed the [Commonwealth of Virginia](#) (with their program starting later this summer), and [Washington state](#). And on April 13, 2026, the [Maryland legislature](#) passed their version of the bill and is currently awaiting signature of Governor Moore. Thank you for being leaders in traffic safety and showing other states what is possible.

Please ensure the Department of Motor Vehicle's timely implementation of this critical program, as we now have regional partners who have followed in our footsteps. With region-wide adoption of ISA technology, we have the opportunity to make significant advances in limiting the danger repeat offenders pose on our streets. As we testified in [2024](#), we believe this program yields a large benefit with a modest investment. We've appended a copy of a recent [news story](#) highlighting our neighbors that have been directly impacted by reckless drivers.

ISA for the District-Owned Fleet:

The [Institute for Insurance Highway Safety](#) recently interviewed fleet managers where ISA has been piloted and noted its benefits in terms of cost savings and improved compliance. We are pleased that the District Government has engaged in using the very same technology in some of the government-owned fleet. The District was highlighted in March 2026 in a [Vision Zero Network webinar](#):

"Real-World Results: DC's Fleet Implementation

In the webinar, Tina Roper shared how the Washington, DC's Child and Family Services Agency (CFSA) approached ISA after telematics data revealed frequent speeding across its 80-vehicle fleet. As she shared, social workers operate under time pressure – moving between court, home visits, and urgent appointments – and speed creep can happen almost unintentionally. When "the vehicle allows it," even well-intentioned drivers can gradually exceed posted limits, especially while focused on demanding job responsibilities.

CFSA implemented ISA across nearly its entire fleet within approximately 2 weeks, pairing installation with staff education, FAQs, and ongoing communications. The results were impressive: after adding ISA to the vehicles, speeding incidents declined by 91% – from 47 in July 2024 to just 4 in July 2025.

The experience reinforces a core Safe System insight: when the system removes the opportunity to speed, behavior changes quickly.”

We applaud this pilot effort and encourage more of it. ***We believe the investment in intelligent speed assistance on the government fleet would also yield savings for the District government. It would help the Office of the City Administrator and the Office of Risk Management mitigate risk and prevent any liabilities should any speeding-related incidents occur.*** And we know the District is not immune to this, based on the lengthy appendix provided in the [Office of Risk Management's performance oversight](#) 30-page appendix of “How Am I Driving?” Complaints received in FY25 and FY26.

Remove the Budget Support Act subtitle that will restrict crash victims' legal rights

The Mayor's [FY27 Budget Support Act](#) includes the subtitle, “Limitation on Liability Against the District of Columbia Act of 2026” (Title 1, subtitle B, lines 169-188). We oppose this subtitle since it severely restricts the rights of victims when they are harmed by a District government actor. This includes traffic crashes caused by a reckless driver. This subtitle is an elimination of a victim's legal rights.

Please remove Title 1, subtitle B, “Limitation on Liability against DC” in the Budget Support Act. Reducing risk—such as installing ISA on the District fleet—and retaining accountability for harm are the better paths to safety, rather than limiting access to justice for those harmed by the actions of the District.

Support for the Office of the Attorney General and their momentum to pursue reckless drivers

The STEER Act's provision that allowed the Office of the Attorney General to pursue civil cases against the most egregious and reckless drivers has been incredibly impactful. We testified at OAG's performance oversight hearing applauding their efforts, and heard in the Q&A with Attorney General Schwalb that OAG staff are now gaining the expertise and momentum to more efficiently pursue cases. ***We encourage the Council to continue to support the OAG in this effort and to fund the staff needed to carry out this critical provision of the STEER Act.***

The District has won settlements totalling over \$675,000 from STEER Act cases as of March 2026, and we are tracking the success of those cases as noted in the OAG's press releases. However, we request further transparency to track the progress of collections from settlements and judgements, including a description of how it works with out of state debtors, and where those funds are going within the budget. Are these funds being reinvested in safety?

Invest in projects that create safe travel environments

A multifaceted approach is needed to save lives and prevent serious injuries. DC agencies and the Council have identified policies and priorities, like MoveDC , that will enable our city to achieve its safety, environmental, and mobility goals. The issue now is to follow through on those commitments. DDOT's [before/after action project evaluations](#) have demonstrably shown measurable improvements to safety.

We support investments at the District Department of Transportation that would build infrastructure to create safe travel environments, and to do so in a manner that prioritizes shovels-in-ground over endless public meetings. This includes supporting more and quicker completion of traffic safety inputs (TSIs), bus priority projects, expansion of the automated traffic safety program, momentum on sidewalk repair, and implementation of the Strategic Bikeways Plan. We have seen delay after delay on safety projects, like the Taylor Street NE Protected Bike Lane, that will have a measurable positive impact for all road users. We urge the Council to fund these projects—including the staff and resources to support them—and ensure that money is spent on building and implementation.

Thank you for investing into the lives of residents and visitors by ensuring everyone can travel safely and with joy in the District.

<https://thenationaldesk.com/news/spotlight-on-america/after-deadly-crashes-states-move-to-stop-super-speeders-with-in-car-technology-washington-dc-crosswalk-school-zone-reckless-driving-is-as-speed-assistance-devices>

After deadly crashes, states move to stop 'super speeders' with in-car technology

by Lisa Fletcher, Andrea Nejman & Nathan Aaron | Spotlight on America

Thu, April 9th 2026 at 12:14 PM | Updated Mon, April 13th 2026 at 1:05 PM

A growing number of states are cracking down on some of the most dangerous drivers on the road — so-called “super speeders,” repeat offenders who push far beyond the limit — with a new kind of penalty: technology that can physically stop them from speeding.

The push comes as victims and safety advocates warn that extreme speeders are responsible for a disproportionate share of deadly crashes.

Deborah O’Garro-Kelly knows that reality firsthand.

She and her husband were walking to the post office when a driver struck them in a Washington, D.C., crosswalk in a school zone. She survived. Her husband, Alton, who was legally blind, did not. Investigators say he was dragged 900 feet — the length of three football fields — before the driver sped away.

It took 10 months before he was arrested and charged with, among other things, reckless driving: going at least 20-miles an hour over the speed limit, or showing conscious disregard for the safety of others.

“I just feel numb. I feel like I’m in the world, but I feel numb. I feel like this man stole my life,” said O’Garro-Kelly.



O’Garro-Kelly has had four surgeries, must use a walker and has daily in-home care. She says she can no longer work and is facing a 5th surgery in the upcoming months. Photo: SBG



Just months before he was killed, Deborah says she and Alton were able to take a beautiful trip to the Bahamas together. Photo: Deborah O'Garro-Kelly



Deborah O'Garro-Kelly says her husband Alton was the light in every room he entered. Photo: Deborah O'Garro-Kelly.

The couple had been married for four and a half years, but had known each other since she was 17. She described her husband as someone who made people laugh and feel special.

"It's sad that a human being could get ran over like they a piece of trash. And I wish I could have saved my husband," she said through tears.

O'Garro-Kelly was unconscious after the crash. She suffered broken bones in her back, pelvis, right leg and left hip. She spent a month in the hospital and has undergone four surgeries, with more ahead.

“It changed my life tremendously. I was a healthy person. I worked. I went from one medication to nine different medications,” she said.

Traffic safety advocates say cases like O’Garro-Kelly’s are not isolated incidents.

“One in every four fatal crashes involves speeding,” said Cathy Chase, president of [Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety](#).

Chase said a relatively small group of repeat, extreme speeders is responsible for an outsized share of the danger on American roads.



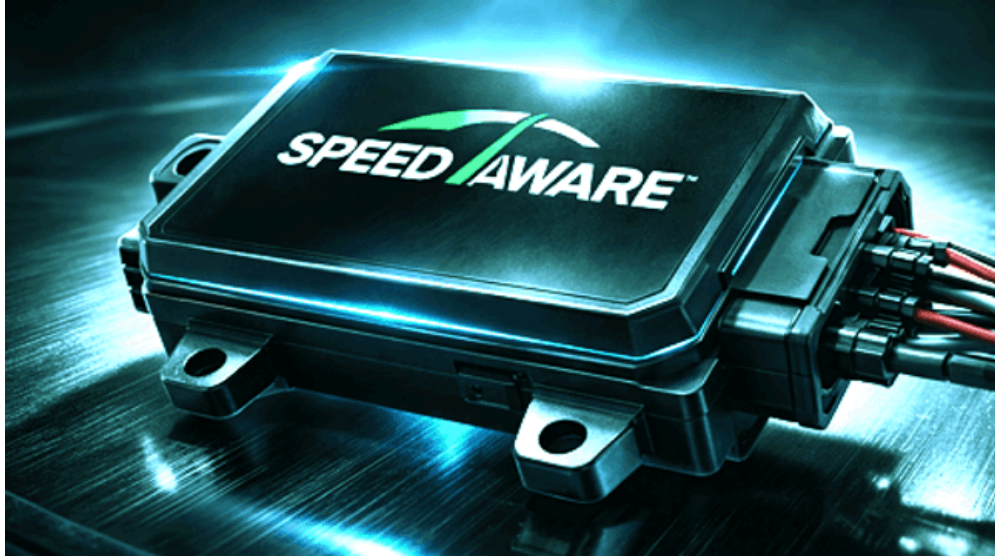
Cathy Chase, President of Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety, says a small number of extremely dangerous drivers cause a disproportionate number of serious crashes. Photo: SBG

“We have all had an experience of someone flying by us on a roadway and thinking, ‘We’re at risk right now.’ Like something, one little slip of a steering wheel and I could be killed and that’s terrifying,” she said.

Now, some states are trying a new approach — not just fines or license suspensions, but technology designed to prevent speeding in the first place.

The systems, known as Intelligent Speed Assistance devices, or ISA’s, are installed in a vehicle and connected to the accelerator. When a driver exceeds the speed limit, the system can limit acceleration..

“What it does is it controls the accelerator and once the person is trying to speed over the speed limit, it will stop you,” said Brandy Nannini of Smart Start, a company that manufactures one of the devices.



Speed-limiting devices are installed under the dash area of the vehicle and not visible to the driver or passengers. This device, by SmartStart beeps as a warning when the driver has reached the speed limit and then prevents the driver from accelerating beyond the posted limit. Photo: SmartStart

During a demonstration drive, once the vehicle reached the speed limit, it began beeping and would not accelerate further.

"I'm flooring it right now," Nannini said, as the vehicle did not accelerate past the posted speed limit.

The goal is to intervene when drivers have repeatedly shown they will not slow down on their own.

"Your right to speed shouldn't interfere with someone else's right to live," said Nannini.

Recent crashes underscore the stakes.

In Maryland, Montgomery County Police Sgt. Patrick Kepp lost both legs after investigators say a serial speeder, traveling more than 100 miles per hour, struck him on Interstate 270 as he attempted to stop the driver. Authorities say Kepp was deploying 'stop sticks' in the roadway — a tool used to deflate tires and end dangerous pursuits — when he was hit.



Montgomery County Police Sgt. Patrick Kepp lost both legs after being struck by a driver traveling more than 100 miles per hour on I-270 while he was deploying stop sticks to stop the vehicle. Photo: Montgomery County Police

In Northern Virginia, 15-year-old Annie Vu and her grandmother, Su Nguyen, were killed on Christmas Day 2025 when a pickup truck going more than 100 miles per hour crashed into their family's minivan as they drove home from holiday dinner.

In Washington state, a teen driver going 112 miles per hour ran a red light and killed a mother and three children. Investigators say the driver was going nearly three times the speed limit and that excessive speed was a primary factor in the crash.

Washington state and Washington, D.C., were among the first jurisdictions to adopt laws authorizing or requiring speed-limiting technology for certain offenders.

The non-profit advocacy group, [Families for Safe Streets](#), was instrumental in the passage of DC's STEER Act, which mandates the installation of ISA devices for drivers whose licenses were suspended or revoked due to excessive speeding or reckless driving.

Virginia has followed, and Maryland may be next.

A bill sponsored by state Sen. Jeff Waldstreicher has cleared the Maryland Senate and is now under consideration in the House.

"This device is for people who are going 30, 40, 50 miles per hour above the speed limit - the folks that are super speeders in our community, they pose a real danger to my family and to yours," Waldstreicher said.

For O'Garro-Kelly, the issue is not about minor speeding.

It is about stopping the kind of reckless driving that can destroy lives in seconds.

“If I can’t get justice one way, can I get it this way of getting these lawmakers to pass the bill of the speeding. It has to stop. it has to stop,” she said.

At least a dozen other states are now considering similar legislation that would require speed-limiting technology for repeat or extreme speeders, signaling what advocates hope could become a nationwide shift in how the most dangerous drivers are handled.

The man who killed Alton Kelly and seriously injured Deborah agreed to a plea deal that resulted in 180 days in jail and a \$100 fine.

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