

1 H.726

2 Introduced by Representatives Burke of Brattleboro, Clarkson of Woodstock,  
3 Gallivan of Chittenden, Lanpher of Vergennes, Russell of  
4 Rutland City, and Toleno of Brattleboro

5 Referred to Committee on

6 Date:

7 Subject: Highways; town highways; motor vehicles; speed limits

8 Statement of purpose of bill as introduced: This bill proposes to authorize  
9 municipalities to reduce speed limits in downtowns and village centers to  
10 20 miles per hour or above without conducting an engineering and traffic  
11 investigation.

12 An act relating to municipal authority to set speed limits

13 It is hereby enacted by the General Assembly of the State of Vermont:

14 Sec. 1. GENERAL ASSEMBLY; STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

15 The purpose of this act is to increase livability in Vermont communities by  
16 enhancing the safety and accessibility of streets in downtowns and village  
17 centers.

1 Sec. 2. 23 V.S.A. § 1007 is amended to read:

2 § 1007. LOCAL SPEED LIMITS

3 (a)(1) The legislative body of a municipality may establish, ~~on the basis of~~  
4 ~~an engineering and traffic investigation,~~ a speed limit on all or a part of ~~any~~  
5 ~~city, a town or village~~ highway within its jurisdiction, ~~which:~~ Except as  
6 provided in subdivisions (2) and (3) of this subsection, the speed limit shall be  
7 established on the basis of an engineering and traffic investigation and shall be  
8 not more than 50 miles per hour and not less than 25 miles per hour.

9 (1)(2) ~~is not more than 50 miles per hour; however, after~~ After  
10 considering neighborhood character, abutting land use, bicycle and pedestrian  
11 use, and physical characteristics of the highways, the legislative body of a  
12 municipality may vote to set the maximum speed limit, without an engineering  
13 and traffic investigation, at not more than 50 miles per hour nor less than  
14 35 miles per hour, on all or a portion of unpaved town highways within its  
15 boundaries, unless otherwise posted in accordance with the provisions of this  
16 section; ~~or~~

17 (2) ~~is not less than 25 miles per hour.~~

18 ~~If the legislative body of a municipality votes to set the speed limit on all~~  
19 ~~unpaved town highways in its boundaries at no more than 50 miles per hour~~  
20 ~~nor less than 35 miles per hour as provided for in subdivision (a)(1) of this~~

1 ~~section, signs~~ Signs shall be located at points of change from one speed limit to  
2 another.

3 (3)(A) As used in this subdivision:

4 (i) "Downtown" means the traditional central business district of a  
5 community that has served as the focus of socioeconomic interaction in the  
6 community, characterized by a cohesive core of commercial and mixed use  
7 buildings, some of which may contain mixed use spaces, often interspersed  
8 with civic, religious, residential, and industrial buildings and public spaces,  
9 typically arranged along a main street and intersecting side streets that are  
10 within walking distance for residents who live within and surrounding the core  
11 and that are served by public infrastructure such as sidewalks and public  
12 transit. Downtowns are typically larger in scale than village centers.

13 (ii) "Village center" means the core of a traditional settlement,  
14 typically comprising a cohesive mix of residential, civic, religious,  
15 commercial, and mixed use buildings arranged along a main street and  
16 intersecting streets that are within walking distance for residents who live  
17 within and surrounding the core. Industrial uses may be found within or  
18 immediately adjacent to these centers. Village centers are typically smaller in  
19 scale than downtowns.

