



4/9/2024

To: House Committee on Transportation

RE: S.184

Associated General Contractors of Vermont (AGC/VT) is the trade organization for contractors and construction workers in Vermont. We provide industry specific training, Occupational and Safety Health Administration (OSHA) and Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) certifications and are home to nationally recognized safety instruction. Our members employ 15,000-20,000 in Vermont annually with careers offering wages and benefits well above Vermont's livable wage. Our members work directly with state agencies including the VTRANS, Building and General Services and Department of Labor to enhance delivery of service to the state.

Work zone safety has been a priority for AGC/VT members for quite some time. With uncountable near misses, aggressive drivers, distracted drivers, and deaths in work zones which include both the travelling public and workers its clear we have a problem. AGC/VT has been working on several initiatives including increasing training requirements for workers, working with engineers to improve traffic patterns in work zones, encouraging a 4th duty in the state specifications manual allowing police officers to enforce traffic laws within work zones, and participating in a 4-year policy study to include automated speed safety signs in work zones.

One of the top three priorities for Vermont voters in multiple polls was public safety. S.184 is a policy that will help accomplish that goal of keeping workers safe on jobsites, the travelling public safe from collisions in those jobsites, and keep travel open and safe for emergency vehicles. This bill is the work of many people including the flagging community, AGC/VT, VTRANS and the general assembly. You have taken the appropriate steps to create quality legislation that has considered all the potential challenges to be faced including public privacy, notification and administrative.

AGC/VT first launched a campaign after the death of James Alger of LPD Traffic Control with a flagger summit, press conference and testimony at committees. After concerns of "big brother" or technical issues the assembly directed VTRANS to complete a study based on experiences with the hardware and enforcement. Then the next year after the study showing most concerns to have common sense approach solutions was presented the general assembly ordered a pilot program using the equipment which had a more than satisfactory report showing the equipment to be stable. Now we are here with the opportunity to add these necessary tools to our jobsites where needed with the appropriate amount of warning, public protections, and efficacy.

The only suggestion AGC/VT has other than passing S.184 is removing language related to traffic control signals in the "Statement of Purpose" so members of the assembly are clear that it is not part of the bill at large.

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AGC/VT

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