|  |
| --- |
| BILL ANALYSIS |

|  |
| --- |
| S.B. 1663 |
| By: Alvarado |
| Transportation |
| Committee Report (Unamended) |

|  |
| --- |
| **BACKGROUND AND PURPOSE**  Constituents have raised concerns that current speed limits within residential communities are unsafe for children due to speeding on dense residential streets. Children under 14 years of age at play are uniquely at risk of injury from a motor vehicle crash due to a lack of developed motor skills, cognition, and perceptual judgment. Drivers traveling at lower speeds have more time to react to pedestrians and can come to a complete stop faster. Studies conducted by the U.S. Department of Transportation indicate that lowering speed limits on residential streets decreases rates of crashes, and if crashes do occur, injuries are less severe. Current state law requires municipalities to perform extensive engineering or traffic investigations in order to declare a lower speed limit. S.B. 1663 seeks to authorize municipalities to lower speed limits on residential streets to 20 miles per hour without having to perform an engineering or traffic investigation. |
| **CRIMINAL JUSTICE IMPACT**  It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly create a criminal offense, increase the punishment for an existing criminal offense or category of offenses, or change the eligibility of a person for community supervision, parole, or mandatory supervision. |
| **RULEMAKING AUTHORITY**  It is the committee's opinion that this bill does not expressly grant any additional rulemaking authority to a state officer, department, agency, or institution. |
| **ANALYSIS**  S.B. 1663 amends the Transportation Code to make the following changes regarding a municipality's authority to declare a lower speed limit for certain two-lane, undivided highways or parts of a highway if the prima facie speed limit is determined to be unreasonable or unsafe:   * changes the authorized lowered speed limit from not less than 25 miles per hour to not less than 20 miles per hour; * exempts the municipality from the requirement to perform an engineering or traffic investigation if the applicable street is located in a residence district; and * excludes such a speed limit alteration from the applicability of the following provisions:   + a provision specifying that an altered speed limit is effective when the municipality's governing body erects signs giving notice of the new limit and at all times or at other times as determined; and   + a provision requiring the annual publication of a report regarding citations and accidents on a highway or part of a highway with a lowered speed limit and the submission of that report to the Department of Public Safety. |
| **EFFECTIVE DATE**  September 1, 2023. |