Dear Mark Ruskell MSP

I am writing as a member of the public to support your proposal for a Members' Bill on 20mph zones, which would replace the default 30 mph speed limit with a 20 mph limit.

Such a proposal would deliver on Scottish Government policy, which supports 20mph zones in residential areas. Currently local authorities must embark on an expensive, time consuming process to change the limit which may yield patchwork results. 30mph should be made the exception rather than the rule.

In this way our streets will be made safer in terms both of the consequences of traffic accidents and of emissions rates and air pollution. The proposal could unlock the potential for higher rates of walking and cycling, leading to a modal shift and a further lowering of levels of air pollution and carbon emissions from the transport sector. There is also evidence that 20mph zones encourage smoother driving and therefore fewer emissions, particularly of NOx and PM from diesel cars.

I do not see any serious disadvantage with the proposal since, with smoother driving, journey times are unlikely to take any longer.

A combination of advertising, signage and police enforcement should be used to maximise compliance. Traffic calming measures such as speed humps should be avoided where possible since they may cause stop/start driving.

The proposal has the potential to create financial savings for Scotland and, in particular, for local authorities. The current model is inefficient. A change of the default limit would require just one Scotland-wide change and associated campaign rather than individual councils having to go through relevant Traffic Regulation Orders, launching targeted campaigns, etc.

Safer streets will make for more pleasant and socially cohesive urban environments with potential benefits to local businesses, happier residents, and more thriving communities. Fewer road casualties, the potential increases in walking and cycling, and the potential reductions in pollution will lead to a healthier and more active society, with associated cost savings to the NHS.

8. Thirty percent of people don’t have access to a car and yet our streetscapes our dominated by cars. Evidence also shows that people living in deprived communities are more likely to suffer in road crashes, so making streets safer will contribute to a more equal society. There is thus no negative impact of the Bill on equality.

I strongly believe that the proposed bill can be delivered sustainably and without having any future disproportionate economic, social and/or environmental impacts.

11. Thank you for considering my response.

Yours sincerely,

My response can be published without my name

Please do not contact me in relation to this submission

By submitting my response to Mark Ruskell MSP’s office, I understand that it will be shared with the Scottish Parliament Non-Governmental Bills Unit