

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 5/9/99

Bill No. AB-274

Or Subject _____

(Name) Rob. Tom LaFare

(Street Address or Route Number) _____

(City & Zip Code) Bell

(Representing) author

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:

Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.
Assembly Sergeant at Arms
Room 411 West
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 4/9/99

Bill No. AB 274

Or Subject _____

(Name) Lorlee Brunnerl

(Street Address or Route Number) _____

(City & Zip Code) WI State Patrol

(Representing) _____

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:

Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.
Assembly Sergeant at Arms
Room 411 West
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 6-9-99

Bill No. 274

Or Subject _____

(Name) DeVries Krueger

(Street Address or Route Number) 5666 Concord Dr

(City & Zip Code) REG-MN WI 5357

(Representing) SECP WIS. Trooper

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:

Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.
Assembly Sergeant at Arms
Room 411 West
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 6-9-99

Bill No. 274

Or Subject

RITA GARLSON

(Name)

5630 DANMEDI DR

(Street Address or Route Number)

WAVYHURST, WI 53597

(City & Zip Code)

SELF - WI STATE

(Representing)

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:

Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.

Assembly Sergeant at Arms

Room 411 West

State Capitol

Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 6/9/99

Bill No. 274

Or Subject

EVAN W. BISH

(Name)

(Street Address or Route Number)

(City & Zip Code)

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:

Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.

Assembly Sergeant at Arms

Room 411 West

State Capitol

Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 6/9/99

Bill No. 485274

Or Subject

ANDY ANDRIJASEVIC

(Name)

(Street Address or Route Number)

(City & Zip Code)

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:

Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.

Assembly Sergeant at Arms

Room 411 West

State Capitol

Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 6-9-99

Bill No. 274
Or
Subject

(Name) Casey Perry

(Street Address or Route Number) 2099 Ironwood Dr

(City & Zip Code) Green Bay WI 5301

(Representing) SELF - WI Trooper

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:
Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.

Assembly Sergeant at Arms
Room 411 West
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: 6-9-99

Bill No. ARS 274
Or
Subject MASSIVE IN DEBT

(Name) Jeff Conrad (Sgt)

(Street Address or Route Number) 730 BAKER ST.

(City & Zip Code) WIS. RAPIDS, WIS. 54494

(Representing) WIS. RAPIDS POLICE DEPT.

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:
Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.

Assembly Sergeant at Arms
Room 411 West
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Handwritten notes: SPEAKING ONLY FOR MYSELF! CONFUSING ISSUE. OUR IMPROVING? STATUTE? 346.59(a)?

Assembly Hearing Slip

(Please print plainly)

Date: June 9-1999

Bill No. 274
Or
Subject

(Name) Donna M. Long

(Street Address or Route Number) 221 East Grand Ave

(City & Zip Code) Green Bay WI 54987

(Representing) no

Speaking in favor:

Speaking against:

Registering in favor:

Registering against:

Speaking for information only:
Neither for nor against:

Please return this slip to a messenger promptly.

Assembly Sergeant at Arms
Room 411 West
State Capitol
Madison, WI 53702

Handwritten notes: ...

Highway Safety Committee Hearings on AB274
June 9, 1999

Comments by Eric M. Bloch
Glendale, WI

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before this hearing.

- What the bill does:
 - This bill is NOT about speeding. It is NOT about road rage.
 - It IS about safety. It IS about helping to create an orderly flow of traffic by encouraging lane discipline and courtesy to other drivers.
 - It WILL reduce many accident scenarios.
 - tailgating, multiple lane changes, and cutting off other cars while maneuvering through the packs
- "Left-lane-itis" is a disease that has become worse over the years as traffic has become heavier.
 - Drivers have forgotten lane discipline and courtesy toward other drivers.
- Left lane campers create traffic bottlenecks.
 - They force cars to move in packs - which are hazardous in their own right.
 - It contributes to "tailgating."
 - They require other drivers to change multiple lanes unnecessarily while looking for an empty passing lane.
 - This increases the potential for accidents
 - It may lead to cutting-off other drivers in the process of maneuvering through the traffic trying to pass.
- Those claiming a "right" to be in the left lane if driving the speed limit are not in tune with reality.
 - Drivers who want to go faster will do so.
 - They will take the path of least resistance.
 - They maneuver through packs as required to maintain desired speed, sometimes creating unsafe situations for the other drivers.
 - If those drivers were able to safely pass in the left lane, they would be far less likely to be "maneuvering" and endangering other drivers.
- Education is important
 - In addition to this legislation, it is important that lane discipline be taught in the drivers education classes.

- Additional Comments

- Some drivers stay in the left lane to avoid traffic getting on and off
 - The law will not prevent them from moving to the left lane to pass cars merging onto the freeway or exiting.
- Some drivers who stay in the left lane are oblivious to traffic conditions around them.
 - The law will wake them up.
 - It will force them to remain alert
 - It will give them an adrenaline rush when they must change lanes to pass and return.
- Some left lane drivers feel they are performing a service by slowing down traffic.
 - If they would allow the "speeders" to pass, the State Patrol would have an easier time catching them.
- Some left lane drivers feel they have a "right" to be in the left lane.
 - Generally speaking, in our society, such "rights" must be limited when they infringe on the "rights" of others.
 - In this case, the left lane campers are infringing on the rights of other drivers to drive in unrestricted, smoothly flowing traffic.

I encourage the Committee to recommend passage of this bill.

Thank you.

Prentiss, Mike

From: Hughes, Dennis-DTIM
Sent: Wednesday, February 17, 1999 11:24 AM
To: Prentiss, Mike
Cc: Evans, John-DTIM; Rusch, Peter; Brumund, Lorelee
Subject: RE: cosponsorship of LRB1170/2 driving in the left lane

Sorry for the delay in responding, but I wanted to check with my colleagues in State Patrol and the Bureau of Highway Operations.

As it turns out, the State Patrol has already been consulted by Rep. LaFave's office on this LRB draft. If I understand correctly, they have pointed out a couple terms in the bill draft that could be problematic for real-world implementation. For example, the term "continuously" may be overly vague and could lead to inconsistencies in enforcement.

Also, "controlled access highway" may be an overly broad description of the roads that this law is intended for. For example, some 2-lane roads have statutorily authorized access control applied by WisDOT, counties or municipalities. Also, urban freeways are "controlled access" highway, but the nature of the travel environment puts an entirely different spin on the question of driving in the leftmost lane. We assume the bill author meant to have the new law apply to rural, 4 or more lane, divided highways.

As far as the safety merits of the proposal go, it is generally consistent with our Department's long-standing view that motorists should stay out of the left lane except to pass. However, there are differences of opinion on exactly how roadside signs should be worded since the last thing we want to do is inadvertently convey the sense that exceeding the posted speed limit is a good idea.

Thanks for asking.

-----Original Message-----

From: Prentiss, Mike
Sent: Friday, February 12, 1999 3:45 PM
To: Hughes, Dennis-DTIM
Subject: RE: cosponsorship of LRB1170/2 driving in the left lane

Here's the text:

February 12, 1999

TO: All Legislators
FR: Rep. John La Fave
RE: LRB 1170/2 - Relating to impeding the flow of traffic by the continued operation of a vehicle in the left-hand lane of a controlled access highway.

This bill prohibits a person from impeding the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane of a controlled access highway. A person who violates this prohibition may be required to forfeit not less than \$30 nor more than \$300, the same penalty that applies to violations of the requirement of traveling in the right-hand lane of the roadway.

When you and I learned to drive, we were taught that the left lane is for passing. Once a vehicle has been overtaken and passed, we move back into the right (or middle) lane. Today, many drivers stay in the left lane at all times, even when moving slower than other traffic. These people create traffic bottlenecks that often force cars to move in packs, and causing others to change multiple lanes unnecessarily while looking for an empty passing lane. It also contributes to the phenomenon of "tailgating."

One of the contributing factors to the "road rage" we've read so much about lately is driving on a 6-lane highway and being boxed in behind a vehicle driving the same speed as the car next to them.

This legislation essentially requires drivers to only use the left lane to pass. This legislation should significantly improve the safety of our highways by reducing many accident scenarios (e.g. tailgating, multiple lane changes, and cutting off other cars while maneuvering through the packs), and would also contribute to a reduction in road rage.

If you would like to cosponsor this legislation, please call my office at 266-0486 by Thursday, February 26, 1999.

Please see bill with analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau attached.

LRB-1170/2
PEN:cmh&jlg

1999 - 2000 LEGISLATURE

1999 BILL

AN ACT to amend 346.02 (6); and to create 346.05 (1g) of the statutes; relating to: impeding the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane of a controlled-access highway.

Analysis by the Legislative Reference Bureau

Current law generally requires that all vehicles be driven in the right half of the roadway and in the right-hand lane of a three-lane highway, except when making an approach for a left turn, when overtaking and passing or when circumstances permit or require driving on the left half of the roadway. Current law also requires, with exceptions, that any vehicle traveling at less than the speed of surrounding traffic be driven in the right-hand lane then available for traffic, or as close as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway.

This bill prohibits a person from impeding the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane of a controlled-access highway. A person who violates this prohibition may be required to forfeit not less than \$30 nor more than \$300, the same penalty that applies to violations of the requirement of traveling in the right-hand lane of the roadway.

The people of the state of Wisconsin, represented in senate and assembly, do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. 346.02 (6) of the statutes is amended to read:

1999 - 2000 Legislature

-2-

LRB-1170/2
PEN:cmh&jlg
Section 1

BILL

346.02 (6) APPLICABILITY TO PERSONS WORKING ON HIGHWAYS. This chapter applies to persons, teams, motor vehicles and road machinery while traveling to or

from highway construction or maintenance work but the provisions of ss. 346.05 (1g) and (3), 346.06 to 346.17, 346.28, 346.29 (2), 346.31 to 346.36, 346.52 to 346.56 and 346.59 do not apply to persons, teams, motor vehicles or road machinery when actually engaged in maintenance or construction work upon a highway.

SECTION 2. 346.05 (1g) of the statutes is created to read:

346.05 (1g) No person may impede the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane of a controlled-access highway.

SECTION 3. Initial applicability.

(1) This act first applies to the operation of motor vehicles on the effective date of this subsection.

(END)

-----Original Message-----

From: Hughes, Dennis-DTIM
Sent: Friday, February 12, 1999 3:40 PM
To: Prentiss, Mike
Subject: RE: cosponsorship of LRB1170/2 driving in the left lane

I couldn't open the attached document. Was it created in Word 7.0? If so, could you re-send it as a Word 6.0 or WordPerfect document? We'd be happy to take a look at it.

-----Original Message-----

From: Prentiss, Mike
Sent: Friday, February 12, 1999 3:34 PM
To: Hughes, Dennis-DTIM; Evans, John-DTIM
Subject: FW: cosponsorship of LRB1170/2 driving in the left lane

Any thoughts on this proposal?

Mike Prentiss

-----Original Message-----

From: Zimmerman, Terri
Sent: Friday, February 12, 1999 3:28 PM
To: *Legislative All Assembly Democrats; *Legislative All Assembly Republicans; *Legislative All Senate Democrats; *Legislative All Senate Republicans
Subject: cosponsorship of LRB1170/2 driving in the left lane

No hard copy will be provided

<< File: Left-lane cosponsor memo.doc >>

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN,

I AM A MORTGAGE BROKER AND SPEND A LOT OF TIME TRAVELING ON WISCONSIN'S ROADS. I FIND IT PARTICULARLY ANNOYING WHEN PEOPLE "DILY DALLY" IN THE LEFT LANE OF A HIGHWAY GREATER THAN 2 LANES. THESE PEOPLE HAVE MADE ME LATE FOR APPOINTMENTS AND ARE A MAJOR CONTRIBUTING FACTOR TO THE EVER GROWING "ROAD RAGE" ON WISCONSIN'S HIGHWAYS.

THE PURPOSE OF MULTILANE HIGHWAYS IS TO INCREASE THE EASE AND SPEED AT WHICH TRAFFIC FLOWS. THE LEFT LANE OF THESE HIGHWAYS ARE FOR PASSING A CAR AND RETURNING TO THE RIGHT LANE. WHEN PEOPLE HANG IN THE LEFT LANE THEY DECREASE THE SPEED AND EASE AT WHICH TRAFFIC FLOWS, THEREFORE DEFEATING THE MAIN PURPOSE OF THE MULTILANE HIGHWAY, AS WELL AS DISOBEYING THE SLOWER TRAFFIC KEEP RIGHT SIGNS.

THESE PEOPLE ON WISCONSIN HIGHWAYS ARE AS MUCH OF A PROBLEM AS THE PEOPLE WHIZZING BY AT 80 MPH AND SHOULD BE DEALT WITH IN THE SAME MANNER, WITH THE SAME FORCE. THANK YOU FOR YOUR IMMEDIATE ATTENTION IN THIS MATTER.

Mark
Albright

WISCONSIN COUNTY POLICE ASSOCIATION LTD.

President

Leigh M. Wille
E12963 Hwy 78
Merrimac WI 53561

Vice President

Stephen Meitner
11 Seneca Court
Appleton WI 54911

Legislative Comm. Chairman

Eugene Robinson
733 State Street
Jefferson WI 53549



Secretary

Teri L. Wegner
1429 Lakeview Dr.
Fort Atkinson WI 53538

Treasurer

Richard Schevers
2107 E. Main Street
Kaukauna WI 54130

Admin Assistant

Dale M. Noack
PO Box 11
Oconto Falls WI 54154

Lobbyist

Broydrick & Associates
44 E. Mifflin St., Suite #404
Madison WI 53073

To: Representative Jeff Stone, Chair
Members of the Assembly Committee on Highway Safety
From: Eugene Robinson
Date: Wednesday, June 9, 1999
Re: Testimony in Support of AB 274

The Wisconsin County Police Association (WCPA), established in 1947, represents over 1,100 deputies, communication dispatchers and county jailers throughout Wisconsin. The Association supports the intentions of Assembly Bill 274 and urges committee members to vote for passage of this legislation.

Current Wisconsin law already requires that all vehicles be driven in the right half of the roadway, except under certain circumstances, and that vehicles traveling at less than the speed of surrounding traffic be driven in the right-hand lane, if available.

I have served as a sheriff's deputy patrol officer for 30 years and have witnessed the dangerous emotional and irrational reactions of drivers on Wisconsin roadways. These reactions can only be described as road rage. As many of you are aware, from local and national news reports, road rage has become more prevalent on our local roads and highways. Although, there is no excuse for this type of behavior, we must all recognize the affects road rage can have on human life. I do not sympathize with drivers who improperly operate motor vehicles on Wisconsin roadways, or with those individuals who would lose control of their emotions when behind the wheel. But we need to recognize that people do react and that when a vehicle travels in the left lane at a slower speed than surrounding traffic, many drivers will react improperly, risking their life and the lives of those around them.

Directors

Director At Large Robert Wierenga N5532 Johnson Road Delavan WI 53115	District 1 John Strese N7112 CTH-P Watertown WI 53094	District 2 Sandra Foote W3865 Evergreen Malone WI 53049	District 3 John Cmeyla 620 Juneau Street Kewaunee WI 54216	District 4 Robert Lyon 603 SW Ceresco Berlin WI 54923
District 5 Rusty Frisk 416 E. Main Sparta WI 54656	District 6 Robert Sorenson 716 W. Haven Chippewa Falls WI 54729	District 7 James Counter 3842 Pineview Dr Rhineland WI 54501	District 8 Sandra Burdick 217 S. St. Marie Street Barron WI 54812	

Support Assembly Bill 274
Page 2

The Wisconsin County Police Association supports prohibiting a driver from impeding the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane and imposing a penalty. The Association recognizes that enforcement of this legislation in metropolitan areas may prove to be difficult and that further modifications to the bill may need to be included. However, for the majority of Wisconsin's roadways this legislation is necessary.

On behalf of the Wisconsin County Police Association, I urge committee members to support passage of Assembly Bill 274.

Thank you.

June 8, 1999

TO: Assembly Highway Safety Committee
RE: Assembly Bill 274

As a full-time Realtor since 1971, I am on the road system, both highway as well as the major thoroughfares, through Madison. (This could be any major artery in any city.)

Time is valuable to many people and the orderly flow of traffic is critical to one's use of time. With this in mind, I submit that those who either do not have a clue that the left lane is for passing, not occupying continuously; or those who think they will be the self-appointed "pace setter," truly cause what is commonly known as "road rage." Having felt this frustration regularly, it certainly adds to the stress of the day.

I know that some will say that this bill will encourage speeding; again, I submit, it will not because we all know we are subject to being charged with speeding if we get caught. What it will do, is reduce stress, and in many cases, re-active road rage.

I have driven in Europe, Canada, Texas and many western states where moving over to the right to allow a faster moving vehicle pass safely appears to be automatic and much appreciated by all on the road. This is just as true on secondary 2-lane roads.

Judging by the way a lot of young, new drivers also "camp out" in the left lane, they are not even being taught this courtesy in "driver's ed" classes.

I please ask that this bill be supported to the fullest through passage. It will reduce "road rage" and most obviously road casualties and fatalities.

I sincerely thank you for your consideration in this matter.

Darrel Alberts
6389 Grossepark Road
Sun Prairie, WI 53590
Home (608) 249-5050 Office (608) 837-4545

LaViolette Refrigeration Co., Inc.
Commercial Sales & Service

Chairperson Jeff Stone
Assembly Highway Safety Committee
P. O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-7038

June 9, 1999

RE: AB274

Dear Chairperson Jeff Stone,

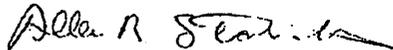
My name is Al Stahnke, President of LaViolette Refrigeration, I am writing this letter regarding Legislation AB-274, I am in strong support of this legislation and would appreciate your sharing this letter with the committee members.

LaViolette Refrigeration is a company that specializes in supermarket installation and SERVICE and for approximately 28 years I have driven the expressways around Milw, the I system (Racine, Kenosha, Madison and Green Bay) approximately 600,000 miles citation and knock on wood accident free. Thru the years driving is becoming much more difficult due to heavy traffic and road construction, even in these difficult times expressway driving can be tolerable if the flow of traffic is constant that is the left lane moving faster than the center lane, center lane faster than the right lane. However when this pattern is disruptive by a person driving in the left lane at a reduced speed, it does not take a lot of time before a group of 20-30 cars are bumper to bumper in all three lanes. People can't merge safely from the on ramp and people can't get to their exit ramp. Add to that an emergency vehicle with lights and sirens trying to get by where there is no place to go. The emergency vehicle must use the distress lane until he clears the congestion.

I don't think asking people to drive in the right lane except for passing is much of a burden. Leaving the passing lane open will elevate some congestion, it will eliminate tempers overheating and make for driving more tolerable.

Thank you for your time and attention and I hope you will vote in favor of AB-274.

Sincerely,



Al Stahnke, President
LaViolette Refrigeration Co., Inc.

cc State Representative La Fave

7515 S. Madison Drive • Oak Creek, WI 53154 • (414) 764-6352

JOHN LA FAVE



STATE REPRESENTATIVE 23RD ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Representative John La Fave
Testimony in favor of Assembly Bill 274
June 9, 1999

AB-274 --- "No person may impede the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane of a controlled-access highway."

Most of us learned back in our driver's education classes various 'rules of the road'. One rule is that when driving on a multi-lane highway we should stay in the right lane so as to allow faster traffic to pass us in the left lane(s). We can use the left lane for passing. We can promote safe and efficient traffic flow by moving back over to the right (or middle) lane when we have completed passing. Highway signs on the interstate read "Slower traffic keep right". Unfortunately, too many drivers don't think this important traffic message applies to them.

As drivers we have all run into the problem of other drivers who don't care to follow this 'rule of the road'. They stay in the left-lane, either not aware that they should move over to the right or simply not caring about other traffic around them. These people create traffic bottlenecks and cause others to change lanes in an attempt to pass them. This also contributes to the phenomenon of 'tailgating'.

The purpose of this legislation is to eliminate the hazard of vehicles staying in the left-hand lane, thereby impeding safe passing by other vehicles.

The bill states "**No person may impede the flow of traffic by continuously operating a motor vehicle in the left-most lane of a controlled-access highway.**" The penalty is a forfeiture from \$30 to \$300. This is the same penalty that applies to other violations of the requirement of traveling in the right-hand lane of the roadway.

The American Automobile Association (AAA) reports that 21 states have some kind of left-lane restriction in place. Texas has enacted a 'keep right except to pass law' that requires drivers to return to the right lane immediately after passing the slower traffic. Their new signs warn "Left Lane For Passing Only". Drivers are ticketed who remain in the left-lane.

California's law makes reference to vehicles being driven at a speed less than the 'normal speed of traffic' and also mentions 'Notwithstanding the prima facie speed limits...' which at least acknowledges that just because you're going the speed limit, traffic flow may be going faster.

AB-274 was modeled after the Arkansas law enacted 2 years ago, which reads "Motor vehicles shall not be operated continuously in the left-lane of a multilane roadway whenever it impedes the flow of other traffic."

Last year the Wisconsin State Patrol conducted a survey of its Troopers focusing on the need to encourage slower motorists to drive in the right-hand lanes of multi-lane highways. Over 70% of the Troopers thought that wording on signs that would say "**keep right except to pass**" or "**left lane for passing only**" would be easier for motorists to understand than the current "slower traffic keep right".

The survey summary also includes an observation that drivers who believe that they are entitled to stay in the left lane traveling at the posted speed limit exhibit a difficult driving habit. They feel they shouldn't have to yield to other vehicles traveling faster. This situation is often a cause of "road rage" and is difficult to prevent.

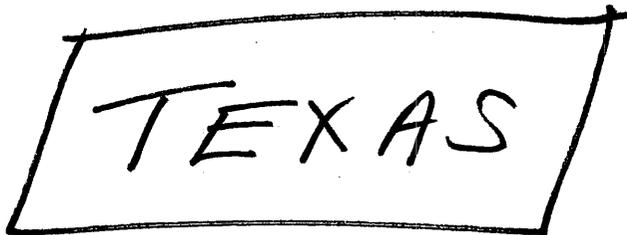
A Washington, D.C. area AAA survey identified left-lane crawlers as a leading cause of aggressive driving. 97% of respondents agreed that slower highway drivers should always keep right and 86% believed motorists traveling at the speed limit should always make way for faster drivers.

I've included in the information packet 20 letters of support for AB-274. The writers come from a variety of backgrounds and communities around the state. Several comment that Wisconsin drivers are lacking in 'keeping right' as compared to drivers in other states. Several also mention the need for changing traffic sign wording to a stronger statement such as 'keep right except to pass.'

Assembly Bill 274 has stimulated much discussion and interest in how to deal with the problem of people who stay in the left lane and cause traffic to backup, frustrating efficient traffic flow on our highways. Communications to my office, commentary on radio call-in shows and letters in newspapers demonstrate widespread public support for passage of AB-274.

The wording of AB-274 is a starting point. I personally could support making it even stronger, such as a true 'keep right except to pass' law as in Texas.

Passage of this legislation will give another tool to law enforcement and assist in educating the public to stay to the right and allow other faster traffic to pass.



New signs will try to steer Texans into the right lane / Law can punish drivers who clog up the left ... *Houston Chronicle, Jul 5, 1998*

AUSTIN – Lingerin in the left lane of a highway for any longer than it takes to pass someone could cost you.

A little noticed law passed by the 1997 Legislature makes it a misdemeanor to drive in the left-hand lane on any major thoroughfare in Texas for longer than it takes to pass a slower car and return to the right lane.

Drivers who refuse to budge from the left can be fined up to \$200, Phyllis Chandler, spokeswoman for the Texas Department of Transportation, said Thursday.

The law went into effect on Sept. 1, 1997, but signs warning, "Left Lane For Passing Only" are just now going up in most parts of the state. The new law will replace signs reading "Slower Traffic Keep Right."

"I think it's important for people to realize that the signs are going to be another tool to deep traffic moving," Chandler said. "Everyone has experienced getting behind someone who is in the left lane and isn't keeping up with traffic. The reality is, there are 19 million of us in Texas, and we need to keep moving."

Chandler was quick to point out that the new law isn't an excuse to speed.

The law was sponsored, appropriately enough, by Rep. Joe Driver, R-Garland, who said the measure was a response to "road rage".

"We were starting to hear more and more about road rage," Driver said. "On one of my trips to Austin I saw people getting upset with other people about parking in the left lane. The signs saying, 'Slow Traffic Keep Right' are great. I hope they keep some of them around. But we have been taught that left is for passing only. So to keep people calmer, we suggested that they put up some signs and enforce it."

Enough lawmakers and transportation officials agreed with Driver that it is too dangerous to have fast-moving traffic cutting into the right lane to avoid slower cars in the left lane.

John Hurt, a spokesman for the Transportation Department, said the new law doesn't mean that "the fastest cars get to ride in the left lane. Nobody's going to get to ride in it."

VC§ 21651. Divided Highways

- (a) Whenever a highway has been divided into two or more roadways by means of intermittent barriers or by means of a dividing section of not less than two feet in width, either unpaved or delineated by curbs, double-parallel lines, or other markings on the roadway, it is unlawful to do either of the following:
- (1) To drive any vehicle over, upon, or across the dividing section.
 - (2) To make any left, semicircular, or U-turn with the vehicle on the divided highway, except through an opening in the barrier designated and intended by public authorities for the use of vehicles or through a plainly marked opening in the dividing section.
- (b) It is unlawful to drive any vehicle upon a highway, except to the right of an intermittent barrier or a dividing section which separates two or more opposing lanes of traffic. Except as otherwise provided in subdivision (c), a violation of this subdivision is a misdemeanor.
- (c) Any willful violation of subdivision (b) which results in injury to, or death of, a person shall be punished by imprisonment in the state prison, or imprisonment in a county jail for a period of not more than six months.

VC§ 21652. Entrance to Public Highway from Service Road

When any service road has been constructed on or along any public highway and the main thoroughfare of the highway has been separated from the service road, it is unlawful for any person to drive any vehicle into the main thoroughfare from the service road or from the main thoroughfare into the service road except through an opening in the dividing curb, section, separation, or line.

VC§ 21654. Slow-Moving Vehicles

- CALIFORNIA**
- (a) Notwithstanding the prima facie speed limits, any vehicle proceeding upon a highway at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at such time shall be driven in the right-hand lane for traffic or as close as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb, except when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction or when preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway.
- (b) If a vehicle is being driven at a speed less than the normal speed of traffic moving in the same direction at such time, and is not being driven in the right-hand lane for traffic or as close as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb, it shall constitute prima facie evidence that the driver is operating the vehicle in violation of subdivision (a) of this section.
- (c) The Department of Transportation, with respect to state highways, and local authorities, with respect to highways under their jurisdiction, may place and maintain upon highways official signs directing slow-moving traffic to use the right-hand traffic lane except when overtaking and passing another vehicle or preparing for a left turn.

Engrossed Act 854
3/4/97

ARKANSAS CODE OF 1987 ANNOTATED

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*** CURRENT THROUGH THE 1997 SUPPLEMENT ***

TITLE 27. TRANSPORTATION
SUBTITLE 4. MOTOR VEHICULAR TRAFFIC
CHAPTER 51. OPERATION OF VEHICLES -- RULES OF THE ROAD
SUBCHAPTER 3. DRIVING, OVERTAKING, AND PASSING

Ark. Stat. Ann. § 27-51-301 (1997)

§ 27-51-301. Vehicles to be driven on right side of roadway -- Exceptions

... follows:

- (1) When overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction under the rules governing such movement;
- (2) When the right half of a roadway is closed to traffic while under construction or repair;
- (3) Upon a roadway divided into three (3) marked lanes for traffic under the rules applicable thereon; or
- (4) Upon a roadway designated and signposted for one-way traffic.

(b) Motor vehicles shall not be operated continuously in the left lane of a multilane roadway whenever it impedes the flow of other traffic.

ANNOTATED REVISED CODE OF WASHINGTON

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*** THIS SECTION IS CURRENT THROUGH CHAPTER 3 OF THE 1999 REGULAR
SESSION
(ANNOTATIONS CURRENT THROUGH FEBRUARY 1999 ADVANCE CODE SERVICE). ***

TITLE 46. MOTOR VEHICLES
CHAPTER 46.61. RULES OF THE ROAD
DRIVING ON RIGHT SIDE OF ROADWAY -- OVERTAKING AND PASSING -- USE OF
ROADWAY

Rev. Code Wash. (ARCW) § 46.61.100 (1999)

§ 46.61.100. Keep right except when passing, etc

... governing such movement;

(b) When an obstruction exists making it necessary to drive to the left of the center of the highway; provided, any person so doing shall yield the right of way to all vehicles traveling in the proper direction upon the unobstructed portion of the highway within such distance as to constitute an immediate hazard;

(c) Upon a roadway divided into three marked lanes and providing for two-way movement traffic under the rules applicable thereon; or

(d) Upon a street or highway restricted to one-way traffic.

(2) Upon all roadways having two or more lanes for traffic moving in the same direction, all vehicles shall be driven in the right-hand lane then available for traffic, except (a) when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction, (b) when traveling at a speed greater than the traffic flow, (c) when moving left to allow traffic to merge, or (d) when preparing for a left turn at an intersection, exit, or into a private road or driveway when such left turn is legally permitted. On any such roadway, a vehicle or combination over ten thousand pounds shall be driven only in the right-hand lane except under the conditions enumerated in (a) through (d) of this subsection.

PURPOSE OF SECTION.

Subsection (2) of this section seeks to eliminate the hazard of slower moving vehicles driving in the lefthand lane and thereby impeding safe and expeditious passing by vehicles driving at the maximum rate of speed. It was not designed to regulate rights at intersections. *Sadler v. Wagner*, 5 Wash. App. 77, 486 P.2d 330 (1971).

LEVEL 2 - 10 OF 24 DOCUMENTS

~~KENTUCKY~~ REVISED STATUTES ANNOTATED

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*** THIS SECTION IS CURRENT THROUGH THE 1996 SUPPLEMENT ***
*** (1996 REGULAR SESSION) ***

TITLE XVI. MOTOR VEHICLES

CHAPTER 189. TRAFFIC REGULATIONS--VEHICLE EQUIPMENT AND STORAGE

KRS § 189.340 (Michie 1996)

§ 189.340. Overtaking vehicles -- Traffic lanes -- Following vehicles

... safety;

(b) A vehicle shall not be driven in the center lane except when overtaking and passing another vehicle where the roadway is clearly visible and the center lane is clear of traffic within a safe distance, or in preparation for a left turn or where a center lane is at the time allocated exclusively to traffic moving in the direction in which the vehicle is proceeding and is signposted to give notice of the allocation;

(c) Official signs may be erected directing slow-moving traffic to use a designated lane or allocating specified lanes to traffic moving in the same direction and operators of vehicles shall obey the directions of such signs.

(7) A vehicle shall not be driven in the left lane of any limited access highway of four (4) lanes or more with a posted speed limit of sixty-five (65) miles per hour, except in overtaking a slower vehicle, yielding the traffic coming onto such a highway or when traffic conditions exist which would prohibit safe use of the right or center lanes.

(8) (a) The operator of a motor vehicle shall not follow another vehicle more closely than is reasonable and prudent, having regard for the speed of the vehicle and the traffic upon and condition of the highway.

(b) The operator of any motor truck, semitrailer truck, bus or heavy construction equipment unit when traveling upon a highway outside of a business or residential district shall not follow within two hundred fifty (250) feet of another such vehicle or equipment unit. This subsection shall not prevent overtaking and passing, nor shall it apply to any lane specially designated for use of motor trucks or semitrailer trucks, buses or heavy construction equipment units.

NOTES:

- ... three or more lanes.
- 15. -- Middle or passing lane.
- 16. -- Left-hand turns.
- 17. Following vehicle too closely.
- 18. Bridge.



Wisconsin Department of Transportation



Tommy G. Thompson
Governor

Charles H. Thompson
Secretary

DIVISION OF STATE PATROL
4802 Sheboygan Avenue
P.O. Box 7912
Madison, WI 53707-7912

February 11, 1999

Honorable John LaFave
State Representative
State Capitol Rm. 220 North
Madison, Wi 53708

Dear Rep. LaFave;

Please find enclosed within this letter the results of the State Patrol's survey regarding the enforcement and wording of "keep right" signs on Wisconsin's highways. The State Patrol and the DOT Division of Infrastructure Development (DTID) coordinated the survey of sworn personnel in the State Patrol's seven district headquarters and Academy, focusing on the need for and best use of "keep right signs" to regulate and encourage slower motorists (both private vehicles and motor carriers) to drive in the right-hand lanes of multi-lane highways whenever possible.

Survey parameters

- The Troops of seven State Patrol districts were surveyed:
 - Each Troop contains 8-15 sworn officers (Troopers and Inspectors) per Troop
 - Each District has 5-9 Troops.
- The results reflect the aggregate data per Troop, not per individual sworn officer.
- Troops from District 6 in Eau Claire were surveyed in September, 1998, using a trial survey form.
- Troops from the remaining 6 districts were surveyed in October and November of 1998, using a similar, but more clearly worded survey form.
- The results from the State Patrol Academy are not included in the total survey results; the four individual responses do not carry the same weight as Troop survey results (by virtue of their low number), and thus could incorrectly skew any conclusions.

Results

- **Over 50%** of the Troops surveyed thought that citations violating ss.346.05(3) / slow vehicle keep right, ss.346.59(1) / impeding traffic by slow speed, ss.346.59(2) / failure to yield to other traffic due to slow speed, were most generally *bargained down in court* to some other violation.

- **Over 50%** of the Troops surveyed thought that current statutes, *ss.346.59(1)* / impeding traffic & *(2)* / yielding right-of-way to overtaking vehicle, were being cited by law enforcement to enforce the "*slower traffic keep right*" requirement.
- **Other statutes** that are frequently used to enforce the "*slower traffic keep right*" requirement include:
 - ss.346.04(1)* / failure to obey traffic officer
 - ss.346.04(2)* / failure to obey traffic sign
 - ss.346.05(1)* / vehicles to be driven in right-lane of 3-lane highways
 - ss.346.05(3)* / failure for slow vehicle to drive in right lane

- **Over 70%** of the Troops surveyed thought that signs that specifically said "*keep right except to pass*" or "*left lane for passing only*" would be *easier for motorists to understand* than "*slower traffic keep right*". Comments on motorist response include:

- Many motorists do not pay attention to signs along the highways.
- Some motorists may be confused about being permitted to pass.
- On multi-lane highways, motorists will drive in the lane in which they feel comfortable.

- Motorists who are traveling in the left lane and at the posted speed limit, often do not move into the right lane when faster moving traffic approaches from rear, thus creating a block to traffic flow. Wording related to passing may make that problem more correctable in this case.

- **Approximately 45%** of the Troops surveyed thought that signs that specifically said "*keep right except to pass*" or "*left lane for passing only*" would be *easier to enforce* than signs that said "*slower traffic keep right*". **Over 33%** thought that signs with the wording change would require *about the same amount of effort to enforce* as signs that said "*slower traffic keep right*". Comments on enforcement include:

- Enforcement would be most difficult during periods of heavy traffic when all lanes are needed to keep traffic moving (e.g. rush hours, holidays).
- The frustration is not always with ability to enforce, but with some of the decisions on these violations rendered in court.
- Enforcement of these violations is not always seen as a priority

- **Approximately 70%** of the Troops surveyed thought that the "*slower traffic keep right*" signs should be considered for re-wording. Other suggested wordings for signs include:

Keep right except to pass or turn left
Slower vehicles use right lane
Minimum speed 55 mph

- **Over 70%** of the Troops surveyed thought it desirable to *prohibit trucks from using the left (median) lane* because:
 - It would provide for smoother traffic movement because trucks take more time to accelerate to change lanes and pass and often travel at a slower speed than the majority of the traffic.
 - It would lessen the times trucks travel side-by-side and block traffic.

- Trucks create a visibility barrier due to their size.
- Trucks have a “blind spots” that can prevent them from seeing traffic in the right lanes.
- During inclement weather, trucks spray snow, rain, ice, on vehicles they pass, reducing visibility.
- Left lane should be more readily available for passing and use by emergency vehicles.
- **However, almost 25% of the Troops surveyed thought that trucks *should not be prohibited from using the left (median) lane* for the following reasons:**
 - Trucks should be afforded the same rights as other vehicles.
 - Trucks should be able to travel in the appropriate lane to fit into the flow of traffic.
 - Truck traffic would increase in the right lanes and possible cause greater congestion in those lanes.
 - Trucks do not create most of the left-lane problems; automobiles and other vehicles do.

- ***Other observations***

- **One of the most difficult driving habits to control, and to attempt to alleviate, is the motorist who drives in the left lane, at the posted speed limit, and refuses to yield (by moving into the right lane) to faster traffic approaching from the rear. The motorists’ reasoning is often that though they are in the left lane, they are traveling at the posted speed limit and thus not required to yield to some other driver who is operating at a higher prevailing speed. This situation is often a cause of “road rage” and is difficult to prevent.**
- It may be difficult for a law enforcement officer to determine just when a motorist is driving in the left-hand lane and not passing, if “*keep right except to pass*” signs were erected. In some cases, the situation may be arguable.
- Many motor carriers have internal policies that require the drivers to travel in the right lane as much as feasible.
- Motorists often need to travel in a left lane due to the structurally rough or dangerous condition of the right lane.

Conclusion

As a summary statement, it appears that though law enforcement has some concerns over problems associated with travel in right-hand vs left-hand lanes, there is no clear-cut solution. The State Patrol’s focus on *highway safety* requires that law enforcement take whatever steps are necessary, within the mandates of the statutes, to alleviate highway crashes and problems. In that regard, existing statutes provide a good tool for enforcement of safe driving in any lane, and also provide a guide for judicial review of traffic violation charges. However, experienced law enforcement officers are also aware that many motorists do not obey traffic signs, and will drive as they feel appropriate and necessary. Thus, any new legislation should take into consideration not only the driving

habits of private motorists and commercial drivers, but also the *need* to change existing statutes in favor of better enforcement and education of existing statutes.

The State Patrol and DTID are of the opinion that changes to the existing "*keep right*" wording may not ensure a measurable improvement in motorist lane usage, but some proposed wording changes would not be detrimental to traffic flow as well.

I hope this information is of some assistance. Please contact me for any further questions or comments. I can be reached at 608/267-3622 or loralee.brumund@dot.state.wis.us.

Sincerely,

Loralee Brumund

cc: Joe Maassen
Pete Rusch

346.04 Obedience to traffic officers, signs and signals; fleeing from officer. (1) No person shall fail or refuse to comply with any lawful order, signal or direction of a traffic officer.

(2) No operator of a vehicle shall disobey the instructions of any official traffic sign or signal unless otherwise directed by a traffic officer.

346.05 Vehicles to be driven on right side of roadway; exceptions. (1) Upon all roadways of sufficient width the operator of a vehicle shall drive on the right half of the roadway and in the right-hand lane of a 3-lane highway, except:

(a) When making an approach for a left turn under circumstances in which the rules relating to left turns require driving on the left half of the roadway; or

(b) When overtaking and passing under circumstances in which the rules relating to overtaking and passing permit or require driving on the left half of the roadway; or

(c) When the right half of the roadway is closed to traffic while under construction or repair; or

(d) When overtaking and passing pedestrians, animals or obstructions on the right half of the roadway; or

(e) When driving in a particular lane in accordance with signs or markers designating such lane for traffic moving in a particular direction or at designated speeds; or

(f) When the roadway has been designated and posted for one-way traffic, subject, however, to the rule stated in sub. (3) relative to slow moving vehicles.

346.05

(3) Any vehicle proceeding upon a roadway at less than the normal speed of traffic at the time and place and under the conditions then existing shall be driven in the right-hand lane then available for traffic, or as close as practicable to the right-hand edge or curb of the roadway, except when overtaking and passing another vehicle proceeding in the same direction or when preparing for a left turn at an intersection or into a private road or driveway.

History: 1995 a. 138.

Cross-reference: See s. 346.59 for minimum speed regulation and duty of slow drivers.

346.59 Minimum speed regulation. (1) No person shall drive a motor vehicle at a speed so slow as to impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic except when reduced speed is necessary for safe operation or is necessary to comply with the law.

(2) The operator of a vehicle moving at a speed so slow as to impede the normal and reasonable movement of traffic shall, if practicable, yield the roadway to an overtaking vehicle whenever the operator of the overtaking vehicle gives audible warning with a warning device and shall move at a reasonably increased speed or yield the roadway to overtaking vehicles when directed to do so by a traffic officer.

History: 1977 c. 100.

990.001 CONSTRUCTION OF STATUTES

eligible to be in that class unless the city has taken the actions necessary to pass into the class under s. 62.05 (2).

History: 1975 c. 10, 94; 1977 c. 187 s. 135; 1979 c. 89; 1981 c. 314; 1983 a. 135; 1983 a. 192 s. 304; 1993 a. 486.

NOTE: Chapter 89, laws of 1979, which created (5) (b), has a prefatory note by the legislative council which includes a discussion on cross-references.

Cross-references: See s. 401.109 for provision that section titles are part of the commercial code notwithstanding s. 990.001 (6).

As to sub. (4), see s. 801.15 for exception as to computation of time. Also see s. 985.09 (2).

Unless a statute is so vague and uncertain that it is impossible to execute it or to ascertain the legislative intent with reasonable certainty, it is valid. Forest Home Dodge, Inc. v. Karns, 29 W (2d) 78, 138 NW (2d) 214.

Where the legislature enacts a statute which through clerical error refers to and by its terms amends a preexisting statute which had earlier in the same legislative session been renumbered, and there is no issue as to the legislative intent and no doubt that correcting the clerical error in numbering is the only means of having the statute serve the purpose intended, a court is duty bound to rectify the error and substitute the right number for the wrong number used in the statute. State ex rel. Gutbrod v. Wolke, 49 W (2d) 736, 183 NW (2d) 161.

The general rule is that a specific penalty prescribed by a special statute for a particular offense takes precedence over a general provision in a penal code; hence 161.30 (12), Stats. 1969, prescribing a penalty for violation of 161.30, ranging from one year to life imprisonment is a specific penalty provision and takes precedence over 161.20, a general penalty provision permitting maximum punishment of not more than 3 years for offenses defined in ch. 161. State ex rel. Gutbrod v. Wolke, 49 W (2d) 736, 183 NW (2d) 161.

Where a statute imposes a punishment for the commission of an act, this is sufficient to make the act a crime. State ex rel. Gutbrod v. Wolke, 49 W (2d) 736, 183 NW (2d) 161.

See note to 893.01, citing Cuisinier v. Sattler, 88 W (2d) 654, 277 NW (2d) 776 (1979).

When statute is written in objective terms not susceptible to more than one meaning, subjective intent of lawmakers is not controlling. State v. Derenne, 102 W (2d) 38, 306 NW (2d) 12 (1981).

Registered mail serves the purpose of certified mail to an even greater degree. Paterson v. Board of Regents, 103 W (2d) 358, 309 NW (2d) 3 (Ct. App. 1981).

Sender's receipt need not be postmarked. Trojan v. Board of Regents, 104 W (2d) 277, 311 NW (2d) 586 (1981).

See note to 51.20, citing State ex rel. Lockman v. Gerhardtstein, 107 W (2d) 325, 320 NW (2d) 27 (Ct. App. 1982).

Under 990.001 (5) (b) and rule of strict construction of penal statutes, legislature implied repeal of s. 940.29 (9), 1979 stats., when it repealed s. 146.32 (2), 1973 stats. State v. Christensen, 110 W (2d) 538, 329 NW (2d) 382 (1983).

See note to s. 801.15, citing In Matter of Petition of Elec. Power Co. 110 W (2d) 649, 329 NW (2d) 186 (1983).

When contemporaneous report or other document from non-legislative agency or private party forms vital link in chain of legislative history of statute, it may be used to determine legislative intent. Ball v. District No. 4, Area Board, 117 W (2d) 529, 345 NW (2d) 389 (1984).

See note to 807.01, citing White v. General Cas. Co. of Wisconsin, 118 W (2d) 433, 348 NW (2d) 614 (Ct. App. 1984).

Court may consider titles of statutes to resolve doubt as to statutory meaning. In Interest of C.D.M. 125 W (2d) 170, 370 NW (2d) 287 (Ct. App. 1985).

See note to Art. IV, sec. 1, citing Dane County Hospital & Home v. LIRC, 125 W (2d) 308, 371 NW (2d) 815 (Ct. App. 1985).

Unconstitutional clause was severable under (11). Wis. Wine & Spirit Institute v. Ley, 141 W (2d) 958, 416 NW (2d) 914 (Ct. App. 1987).

Subs. (4) (a) and (d) apply to statutes of limitations; the day upon which a cause of action accrues is not included in computing the period of limitation. Pufahl v. Williams, 179 W (2d) 104, 506 NW (2d) 747 (1993).

Second tax payment may be made next secular day when July 31 is on Saturday and office hours unofficial. 60 Atty. Gen. 411.

Computing time in tort statutes of limitation. Ghiardi, 64 MLR 575 (1981).
Researching legislative intent in Wisconsin: A suggested procedure. Nispel. WBB April 1983.

Computing Time. Ghiardi. Wis. Law. March 1993.

Legislative History: The Philosophies of Justices Scalia and Breyer and the Use of Legislative History by the Wisconsin State Courts. Dortzbach. 80 MLR 161 (1997).

990.01 Construction of laws; words and phrases. In the construction of Wisconsin laws the words and phrases which follow shall be construed as indicated unless such construction would produce a result inconsistent with the manifest intent of the legislature:

(1) GENERAL RULE. All words and phrases shall be construed according to common and approved usage; but technical words and phrases and others that have a peculiar meaning in the law shall be construed according to such meaning.

(2) ACQUIRE. "Acquire," when used in connection with a grant of power to any person, includes the acquisition by purchase, grant, gift or bequest. It includes the power to condemn in the cases specified in s. 32.02.

(3) ADULT. "Adult" means a person who has attained the age of 18 years, except that for purposes of investigating or prosecut-

ing a person who is alleged to have violated any state or federal criminal law or any civil law or municipal ordinance, "adult" means a person who has attained the age of 17 years.

(4) BEQUEST AND BEQUEATH. "Bequest" includes a devise; "bequeath" includes devise.

(5) CHIROPRACTOR. "Chiropractor" means a person holding a license issued by the chiropractic examining board.

(5g) COMMUNICABLE DISEASE. "Communicable disease" means any disease that the department of health and family services determines, by rule, to be communicable in fact

(5r) CONTROLLED ACCESS HIGHWAY. "Controlled access highway" means a highway on which abutting property owners have no right or only a limited right of direct access and on which the type and location of all access connections are determined and controlled by the highway authorities.

(6) COUNTY BOARD. "County board" means the county board of supervisors.

(7) EXECUTOR. "Executor," in statutes relating to probate proceedings, includes an administrator with the will annexed.

(7a) EXPRESS HIGHWAY OR EXPRESSWAY. An express highway or expressway is a divided arterial highway for through traffic with "full" or "partial" control of access and generally with grade separations at intersections. "Full" control of access means that the authority to control access is exercised to give preference to through traffic by providing access connections with selected public roads only and by prohibiting crossings at grade or direct private driveway connections. "Partial" control of access means that the authority to control access is exercised to give preference to through traffic to a degree that, in addition to access connections with selected public roads, there may be some crossings at grade and some private driveway connections.

(7g) FIRE CHIEF. "Fire chief" or "chief of a fire department" includes the chief of a department under s. 61.66.

(7m) FIRE DEPARTMENT. "Fire department" includes a department under s. 61.66.

(7r) FIRE FIGHTER. "Fire fighter" includes a person serving under s. 61.66.

(8) FOLIO. "Folio" means 100 words or figures. Any fraction of a folio shall be paid for as a full folio.

(9) FOLLOWING. "Following," when used by way of reference to any statute section, means the section next following that in which the reference is made.

(9a) FREEWAY. "Freeway" means a highway with full control of access and with all crossroads separated in grade from the pavements for through traffic.

(10) GRANTOR AND GRANTEE. "Grantor" includes every person from or by whom any freehold estate or interest passes in or by any deed; and "grantee" includes every person to whom any such estate or interest passes in like manner.

(11) HERETOFORE AND HEREAFTER. "Heretofore" means any time previous to the day on which the statute containing it takes effect; "hereafter" means the time after the statute containing such word takes effect.

(12) HIGHWAY. "Highway" includes all public ways and thoroughfares and all bridges upon the same.

(13) HOMESTEAD. (a) The word "homestead" means the dwelling and so much of the land surrounding it as is reasonably necessary for use of the dwelling as a home, but not less than one-fourth acre (if available) and not exceeding 40 acres.

(b) Any amendment of a homestead statute shall not affect liens of creditors attaching nor rights of devisees or heirs of persons dying prior to the effective date of the amendment.

(14) HOMESTEAD EXEMPTION. "Exempt homestead" means the dwelling, including a building, condominium, mobile home, house trailer or cooperative, and so much of the land surrounding it as is reasonably necessary for its use as a home, but not less than 0.25 acre, if available, and not exceeding 40 acres, within the limitation as to value under s. 815.20, except as to liens attaching or

Left-lane slowpokes a major irritant; in AAA poll, drivers vent frustration at those who keep others from passing. *The Washington Post, Feb. 2, 1999.*

Washington area motorists are overwhelmingly frustrated with slower drivers who stay in the left lane, even those cruising at the speed limit, according to a study by AAA Potomac that identified left-lane crawlers as a leading cause of aggressive driving.

The Annual AAA transportation survey found that 97 percent of respondents agreed that slower highway drivers should always keep right and that 86 percent believed motorists traveling at the speed limit should always make way for faster drivers. In both cases, a large majority said they felt strongly about the issue.

"The intensity of the response was really phenomenal. It is an enormous hot button," said AAA spokesman Lon Anderson.

For the fourth straight year, the AAA survey also found that aggressive driving was identified as the leading threat to highway safety. Drunken driving, which had been considered the leading highway hazard until aggressive driving exploded into the public consciousness in the mid-1990's, slipped further in the AAA poll, now ranking third behind traffic congestion. Forty-six percent of the respondents listed aggressive driving as the top safety threat, 20 percent listed congestion as the top safety threat and 18 percent said drunken driving, followed by large trucks and overall road conditions.

"Safer driving happens when slower vehicles move right. Someone going 55 in the left-hand lane can become a real hazard," Anderson said. He suggested that tougher laws might be required to keep slower drivers to the right. A bill sponsored this month in the Virginia legislature would require motorists to stay out of the left lane unless they were passing or preparing to take a left exit.

This year's telephone survey of 425 motorists marked the first time AAA had solicited opinions about left-lane driving. Anderson said the association decided to include questions about the issue after repeatedly hearing from motorists about their exasperation with drivers who cruise too slowly in the fast lane, and irritation with those who race up from behind and bully them out of the way.

"You follow a guy going 30 miles an hour in the fast lane and you get tense," Terri Kossan, who drives daily between her Sterling home and D.C. job as a retail manager, said in an interview. "You might not be an aggressive driver, but you become one. Then you take it out on everyone at work."

Frank Principi, who commutes between Woodbridge and his D.C. job as a crisis management consultant, said, "It's a safety issue; it affects the flow of traffic, other than just being plain aggravating." And what of drivers who keep to the posted speed limit in the left lane? "That's aggravating, too."

When



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Experts say the need for speed, combined with increased traffic, is causing more drivers to take their frustrations out on others.

State Wants to Slow Road Rage



Mike West

Keeping cool behind the wheel is a worthy goal, but will a new state program help reduce road rage? Experts say the need for speed, combined with increased traffic, is causing more drivers to take their frustrations out on others. A new campaign is taking aim at the real cause of road rage, the person behind the wheel.

[● COMPLETE STORY ↪](#)

In nearly three decades with the Wisconsin State Patrol, Captain Doug Van Buren has seen lots of bad driving, but even a badge is no shield from road rage. Van Buren told of an incident when, "a car came up behind me fast, honking his horn, flipping me off, flashing headlights. I moved to the right, he did same thing as he went by again." Because he was in his own car, Van Buren did not stop the man, but the state hopes a new campaign will stop road rage. Public service announcements aimed at drivers under 35 will air in all Marcus movie theatres for the next six weeks.

According to experts, any driver is vulnerable to the

tailgating, weaving and honking that is called road rage. John Evans of the Wisconsin Department of Transportation explained, "Anyone who's 15 minutes late is a prime candidate for road rage."

A proposed law would penalize people who drive slowly in the left lane, which is intended for passing. Supporters argue that this fuels road rage, because other drivers weave around the slower traffic. Van Buren added, "Their attitude is, I'm going the speed limit, to heck with everyone else. That's road rage in its most subtle form." VanBuren said road rage will decrease when drivers realize they cannot control others' behavior, but they can control their own.

Here are some tips to avoid being the aggressor or victim of road rage. If someone is getting aggressive with you put some distance between him or her and you. Avoid eye contact, and do not make gestures. If you are prone to aggression, allow plenty of time to get to your destination. Do not drive when you are angry, and if you feel yourself getting aggressive, pull over and get out of the car, if possible.

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June 7, 1999

John LaFave
State Representative
Fax (608) 266-7038

Dear John,

I am writing in support of Assembly Bill AB-274, which would prohibit drivers from staying in the left lane of a four-lane highway when doing so impedes traffic flow.

I have been involved with teaching secondary and post-secondary Driver Education, Traffic Safety and Defensive Driving for 42 years. I have taught classes to bus drivers, fire fighters, police officers and groups that drive municipal or state owned vehicles.

Driving and impeding traffic in the left lane of a four-lane highway is a major cause of "road rage." Too often, people drive in the left lane, acting as enforcers of present day speed limits. I see nothing wrong with continuously driving or "hanging" in the left lane as long as we make way for those who want to travel faster on the highway.

For most drivers, a speed limit of 55 means stay under 65, and a speed limit of 65 means stay just under 75. I do not advocate or condone speeding, but Wisconsin obviously does not enforce an absolute speed limit. It's safer to keep up with traffic than to hold it back.

On some stretches of highways throughout the country, even these speeds are exceeded and allowed at times. The last time I drove to New York on I-90, I averaged just under 80 miles per hour, staying with the flow of traffic, police cars moving right along with us, not slowing down anyone. To drive at or under the posted limit, 65, would have been dangerous.

Defensive driving dictates that we check traffic around or behind every five seconds. The left lane is a necessary lane to drive in, but if someone wants to pass, let them. What is happening is people are taking it upon themselves to enforce the speed limit when in fact it's up to the police to enforce the speed limit. Our traffic laws have too many ifs, shoulds, generallys and other vague interpretations. Too many drivers, even those who are supposed to enforce the laws, do not know the laws or fail to practice good driving habits. Ticketing drivers for holding up traffic in the left lane would help educate people about the dangers of this practice.

Sincerely,

Ray LaBrun
1260 Bay Shore Road
Brussels, WI 54204

LaFave, John

From: Scott D. Hansen [scotth@execpc.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 08, 1999 10:56 PM
To: Rep.LaFave
Subject: Slow pokes

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

John,

Being a Republican, I never thought I'd be saying this. I'm finally happy about something a Democrat is doing. ;-) I'm fully in favor of the legislation you're working on to make it illegal to putt along in the left lane. That is one of my biggest pet peeves on the road. I've been telling my family for years that we need a law like many other states have that basically states that the left lane is for passing only. I got really upset when my tax dollars were spent on all these extra aggressive driving patrols. What also needs to be done is the people that CAUSE drivers to become irritable, upset and aggressive should be punished as well. I'm not located in your district, I'm a home owner on the south side of Milwaukee. You let me know who if anyone is against your legislation and I'll email them and give them a piece of my mind. ;-) Thanks for what you're trying to do.

Scott & Tamara Hansen
3580 S. 18th St.
Milwaukee, WI 53221

MJS - 4/19/99

We need more legislation to curb road rage problem

After reading Mary N. Skladanek's letter in The Morning Mail April 12, I feel compelled to press for even more legislation to try and curb road rage.

Because we have the "right" to drive in any lane we wish doesn't make it right. Only the most egregious wrongs have laws enacted to prohibit them. Who can argue with the overall benefit to all drivers by the practice of staying to the right except to pass and leaving speed-law enforcement to the authorities?

Here are a few other "rights" that need action, by my observation, to help curtail road rage:

Never pull out in front of anyone in a manner that makes them slow down.

When turning left, hug the center line to permit passing on the right.

Always use turn signals, well in advance of the turn.

Use the exit ramp for deceleration, not the freeway.

Always merge from an entrance ramp at the speed of traffic.

Always honor another driver's turn signal; don't maneuver to frustrate it.

Citizenry requires all to do whatever is best for all, not only what is desired by the individual. Much of what is called road rage is just people trying to escape the danger of driving near those who don't observe the above "rights."

Jay C. Nelson
West Bend

Slower traffic keep right

After reading Mary N. Skladanek's letter of April 12, I felt some other fuller view of what is going on out there needs to be heard.

I am a self-employed businessman who travels 150 miles a day around southeastern Wis-

consin. I will admit that I was an impatient driver when I started this two years ago, especially with slow drivers in the left lane. I now take a more moderate pace daily, feeling that these slower drivers are not going to get to me.

Nonetheless, I see these people in the left lane, with a line of cars behind them, even watching in the mirrors, seeming to act indignant as people behind them start trying to pass on the right as tempers flair.

This type of driving — even if at the speed limit but slower than the traffic flow — is just as inflaming to the situation as tailgating or cutting people off.

When I started driving 25 years ago, I can remember numerous signs on the highways stating "Slower traffic keep right." Where are they now?

I believe there is enough blame to go around for both kinds of inconsiderate drivers — impatient and self-righteous.

Ray Schaefer
Milwaukee

Municipal Court

Robert Michelson
Municipal Judge



City Hall Annex
800 Center Street
Racine, Wisconsin 53403
414-636-9263

April 7, 1999

Honorable John LaFave
State Representative
P.O. Box 8952
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Representative LaFave:

I am in hearty concurrence with the bill you introduced to fine slow drivers in the passing lane. I believe more accidents are caused by people trying to pass such thoughtless drivers than all the speeders in the world.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Michelson", is positioned above the typed name.

Robert Michelson
Racine Municipal Judge

RM/bw

Gary L. Troy
11805 West Tesch Avenue
Greenfield, WI 53228

April 9, 1999

State Representative
John LaFave
State Capitol 101-14
P.O. Box 7882
Madison, WI 53707-7882

Dear Mr. LaFave:

In the April 6, 1999 Milwaukee Journal/Sentinel, there was an article about your proposal to fine motorists who cause traffic to back up. This certainly is a good idea. Although road rage is not a desirable thing, it is about time that someone recognizes that certain behavior, although not aggressive, can be a cause of traffic problems.

The general lack of courtesy and road manners of many drivers is appalling. If police departments are going to address road rage, then your proposal to fine slower drivers in the left lane causing these aggressive situations is commendable. Thank you for introducing this legislation.

Yours truly,


Gary L. Troy

lh

June 7, 1999

Chairperson, Jeff Stone
Assembly Highway Safety Committee

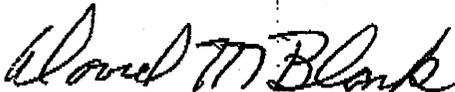
Dear Sir:

I feel that Assembly Bill 274 is an excellent piece of legislation. Here are some of my reasons:

- I travel to Green Bay to see the Packers and on several occasions I have seen people pass on the shoulder because left lane drivers wouldn't move over.
- I have seen people think the left lane is their private lane and refuse to move, and when people try to pass on the right they speed up to block them in.
- In my opinion left lane drivers is the largest single cause of road rage on Wisconsin and America's highways today.
- It also impairs the smooth flow of traffic.

If people are not going to use common courtesy on the road, this law would help make roads safer for everyone. Next to the child car seat law, I feel this is the next great law to ensure safer driving for everyone using Wisconsin's highways. Please share my letter with the committee.

Sincerely,



David M. Blank
N87 W17709 Shepherd Drive
Menomonee Falls, WI 53051
414-251-1287

LaViolette Refrigeration Co., Inc.
Commercial Sales & Service

Chairperson Jeff Stone
Assembly Highway Safety Committee
P. O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708-7038

June 9, 1999

RE: AB274

Dear Chairperson Jeff Stone,

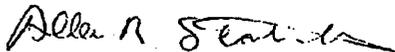
My name is Al Stahnke, President of LaViolette Refrigeration, I am writing this letter regarding Legislation AB-274, I am in strong support of this legislation and would appreciate your sharing this letter with the committee members.

LaViolette Refrigeration is a company that specializes in supermarket installation and SERVICE and for approximately 28 years I have driven the expressways around Milw, the I system (Racine, Kenosha, Madison and Green Bay) approximately 600,000 miles citation and knock on wood accident free. Thru the years driving is becoming much more difficult due to heavy traffic and road construction, even in these difficult times expressway driving can be tolerable if the flow of traffic is constant that is the left lane moving faster than the center lane, center lane faster than the right lane. However when this pattern is disruptive by a person driving in the left lane at a reduced speed, it does not take a lot of time before a group of 20-30 cars are bumper to bumper in all three lanes. People can't merge safely from the on ramp and people can't get to their exit ramp. Add to that an emergency vehicle with lights and sirens trying to get by where there is no place to go. The emergency vehicle must use the distress lane until he clears the congestion.

I don't think asking people to drive in the right lane except for passing is much of a burden. Leaving the passing lane open will elevate some congestion, it will eliminate tempers overheating and make for driving more tolerable.

Thank you for your time and attention and I hope you will vote in favor of AB-274.

Sincerely,



Al Stahnke, President
LaViolette Refrigeration Co., Inc.

cc State Representative La Fave

7515 S. Madison Drive • Oak Creek, WI 53154 • (414) 764-6352

LaFave, John

From: Roberson Family [roberson@wi.net]
Sent: Wednesday, April 07, 1999 12:13 PM
To: Rep.LaFave
Subject: Law fining slow drivers

Dear Representative LaFave,

I whole-heartedly agree with your proposal to fine slow drivers in the left lane. It is a major cause of road rage and I will personally benefit from such a proposal as I commute to Milwaukee from Racine every work day. I have a suggestion along these same lines I'd like for you to consider. Currently, there are signs that state "Slower Traffic Keep Right". The problem with the signs is that many drivers do not understand them or they simply ignore them. A similar, but clearer, message would be "Keep Right Except To Pass". Many drivers do not understand that if they are not passing the cars to their right, they are in the wrong lane! It's a simple concept, but many either don't get it or they don't care.

Thanks for addressing this issue,
Keith Roberson

LaFave, John

From: CLEMENLE@mail.milwaukee.k12.wi.us
Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 1999 2:20 PM
To: Rep.LaFave
Subject: Proposed Bill Regarding Passing Lanes

Dear Representative LaFave,

I would like to express my support for your bill that would impose fines for cruising in the left lane rather than using it to pass only. In addition, it would be most helpful if signs were posted to that effect as they are in most other states. My husband and I travel by car extensively throughout the United States. It does appear that Wisconsin drivers abuse the left lane more than the drivers of any other state. Thank you for addressing this issue!

Lois Clementi
W224 N7634 Wooded Hills Drive
Sussex, WI 53089

LaFave, John

From: Rick.Baldauf@wisconsin.gov
Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 1999 12:52 PM
To: Rep.LaFave
Cc: Rep.Wasserman
Subject: Road Rage Bill

Congratulations to you for initiating a bill to help eliminate the real reason for road rage - idiots who insist on driving slowly in the left lanes or who, at the last moment, change into the left lane in front of a faster oncoming car.

I've never understood why our highways aren't all clearly marked "slower traffic keep right" and "use left lane for passing only". Fines however, probably won't be enough for these morons. They'll probably need to be educated in proper driving etiquette too. How often do you see a slow car with 2, 3 or 10 cars right behind it because the driver is inattentive, oblivious or doesn't care (or worse, knows) that he/she is being a bottleneck. Throw some money in for education, signs and enforcement.

You are to be applauded for your efforts to rectify this situation. I hope my representative jumps on board and helps you pass your bill.

LaFave, John

From: Dennis A. Schmidt [dennis.schmidt@CUNAMutual.com]
Sent: Tuesday, April 06, 1999 12:24 PM
To: Rep.LaFave
Subject: Proposed Passing Lane Bill

Dear Mr. La Fave:

Thank you, Thank you, Thank you. I just read an article about your proposed passing lane bill. This is long overdue. I drive 25,000 to 30,000 miles a year and find that Wisconsin drivers just don't seem to understand the passing lane concept. Though I think the enforcement of this law would be next to nonexistent, at least it will bring this problem up.

Sincerely,

Dennis Schmidt

LaFave, John

From: K. Fred Rist [kfrist@imation.com]
Sent: Thursday, June 03, 1999 4:31 PM
To: Rep.Stone
Cc: LaFave, John
Subject: My support of AB-274

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

I understand that the Highway Safety Committee will hold a public hearing on this bill next Wednesday. I am unable to attend so I write in support of the bill.

I live in Hammond which is 16 miles from Minnesota on I-94. I work in Minnesota so I daily drive to and from Woodbury, Minnesota. I daily experience people who drive constantly in the left lane and tend to block the flow of traffic. Typically this does not bother me since I don't speed, but when traffic get heavier (like Fridays when 1/2 of Minnesota heads to Wisconsin), those who drive in the left cause a large number of cars to bunch together, making driving more difficult. My major complaint with this left lane behavior is headlights in my outside mirror. I drive a small, fuel efficient car. With the popularity of SUV's and pickups, I get many of these vehicles S-L-O-W-L-Y overtaking me in the left lane AND blinding me in the process. Why cannot they stay in the right lane until they need to pass me? I would much prefer if we, in the USA, drove like in the Germans--stay in the right lane until you pass--and then pass quickly so you don't get run over by a BMW or Mercedes!

In addition to left lane drivers, the constant use of fog lamps in clear weather is another very annoying and dangerous activity!

Thanks for listening.

Fred Rist

LaFave, John

From: Dan Ritzinger [danritz@coredcs.com]
Sent: Friday, June 04, 1999 2:08 PM
To: Rep.Stone
Cc: LaFave, John
Subject: Comment on AB-274

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Representative Stone,

I am emailing you to express my strong support for the passage of AB-274, i.e., the bill about "slow traffic cruising in the passing lane". It would impose fines on drivers who cruise in the left lane rather than using it for passing only.

I believe that this is sorely needed. This dangerous practice has been a major frustration of mine for years. I've seen this occurring in all parts of the state.

While my son was attending college in Michigan, on one of our very first trips there during his move, I had travelled only a short distance on their 4-lane highway when I suddenly became aware of something I probably haven't ever experienced in my years of driving in our home state - drivers used the left lane for passing only, returning to the right lane once the pass was completed. I commented to my wife that stricter enforcement of "slow traffic keep right" was long overdue in Wisconsin. We made this trip to and from my son's school a number of times over the years; every time the Michigan portion of the trip was far less trying (and tiring) than that in our home state.

I don't believe many people realize that drivers who cruise in the left lane bottle up faster traffic and cause all sorts of problems on our highways.

I work for Sentry Insurance in Stevens Point and, as an employee, like to see everything possible (but reasonable) done to make our highways safer. It's unfortunate that we need to legislate what should be common sense, but I'm sure it's not the first time, nor will it be the last. There are many good reasons that this bill should become law, and few (or none) why it should not.

Sorry for making this so long, but it's something I feel very strongly about, and am very pleased to see that it's finally being addressed.

Please share this email with your fellow committee members.

Thanks for your help in this important matter.

Dan Ritzinger
7378 Zurawski Court
Custer, WI 54423

LaFave, John

From: John Dienhart [dienhartj@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, June 07, 1999 12:55 PM
To: Rep.Stone; WisGov
Cc: Rep.LaFave; Rep.Jeskewitz; Sen.Darling
Subject: AB-274

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

Dear Mr. Stone:

I would like to express my support of AB-274. Please share my comments with the committee. I have lived in the greater Milwaukee area for nearly 47 years. It is clear that traffic congestion in Milwaukee and the whole Interstate system continues to increase. Unfortunately, the mentality of driving safely, reasonably and considerately has not kept pace with the congestion.

As an employee of U.S. Counseling Services, I commute from Germantown to Brookfield, Wisconsin 5 days a week. I take German language courses at the Goethe Institute at the Milwaukee Public Library weeknights and travel into Milwaukee all year to participate in community sponsored events. A good portion of my drive time can be spent on the expressway system. At present, I have elected to commute to work on village and city streets to avoid the expressway.

In drivers education instruction during high school, we were instructed to move to the right and let overtaking traffic through. The purpose for that reasoning in 1969 is the same today, safety. One cannot see as clearly when a car passes on the right as they can when being overtaken from the left. Large trucks see even less. This law can help bring reasonableness, safety and consideration back to the highway transportation system.

Wisconsin needs a traffic law requiring slower traffic to move and stay to the right when cars are overtaking or when the driver purposely determines to travel at a slower speed. There is more than enough time to move left and take an exit ramp without blocking the left lane for miles, solely for the purpose of making sure you are in the proper lane to exit.

I would also encourage you to consider including provisions making it illegal to use a cell phone, except for an emergency, while operating a moving vehicle in the state. I repeatedly find myself compensating for another driver who is in a "different world" while driving, often because they are on a cell phone. All of one's intellectual capacities should be focused on the matter at hand when driving a motor vehicle, safety, consideration and reasonableness. Please move this bill FORWARD, expressedly as our state motto implies.

Sincerely,

John Dienhart
N96 W16248 County Line Rd.
Germantown, WI 53022.

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LaFave, John

From: Larry Goeb [lsgabe@execpc.com]
Sent: Friday, April 09, 1999 7:55 PM
To: Rep. LaFave
Subject: Road Rage Mitigation

Dear Representative LaFave:

I very much appreciated hearing that you were considering the introduction of legislation to keep slower drivers out of the left (fast or passing) lane of our highways. It is a very good idea because as you have probably noticed, this seems to be the biggest irritant (rage) for drivers which causes a deviation from their intended straight line path.

I'm not sure how many other states already have such legislation, but I think I remember that the German Autoban does enforce this same law.....As I recall, if any traffic was impeded by someone going slower in the left lane, the slow driver could be cited. Incidentally, statistics show that the autobahn is one of the safest or "the" safest highway in the world.

One more suggestion..... Consider legislation for the "mergers" who do not yield the right of way as they should. According to our Rules of the Road Booklet, this merger is considered a lane change requiring all the same turn-signal and precautions as the lane change maneuver. Even our own highway departments confuse our drivers on this one by placing yield signs at only selective on-ramps.....allowing drivers to conclude that they must have the right of way where a yield sign is not posted. Merging maneuvers done poorly, cause "rage" and sometimes accidents.

The Rules of the Road addresses both of the problems above, and tells drivers how to correctly handle their vehicles in each instance. Obviously, what is missing is the legislation that will enable our law enforcement agencies the enforcement power to improve the safety of our roadways and reduce the frustration (rage) of our drivers.

Good Luck on pushing this overdue legislation.

Sincerely,

Lawrence C. Goeb
2866 S. 106th Street
West Allis, WI 53227
414 545-7439

LaFave, John

From: Ron Friedel [rfriedel@execpc.com]
Sent: Thursday, April 08, 1999 7:55 AM
To: Rep.LaFave
Subject: Left lane driving legislation

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Flagged

John,

I listened to the Tom Clark, WPR, call-in program yesterday and I wanted to comment but couldn't get through. In general I agree with you, but, your idea would be easier implemented by simply changing the signs on the side of the Interstate. Change them from "Slower traffic keep right" to "Keep right except to pass."

Last summer we drove to Maine from Brown Deer for a bike tour (one week in Maine/Quebec and the next week in Nova Scotia.) Ontario has "keep right except to pass" signs and traffic was great. We drove X-Canada Highway 17 which is mostly two laned with a third passing lane every 5 miles or so. The slower traffic did stay to the right through these passing lanes and so everyone was satisfied. Over Labor Day weekend we went north on Highway 45 in WI to the Michigan border and in a few places 45 has a third passing lane. On 45 in Wisconsin the normal driver would stay in the left lane and actually speed up to keep the other cars behind him.

Nova Scotia was absolutely wonderful to drive in. Cars on the road in towns would actually stop if it looked like you wanted to cross the road as a pedestrian. Just a lot more civility.

I think Maine and perhaps New Hampshire also have a keep right except to pass law on their Interstates.

Quebec was something else. I'm 1/4 French Canadian and so I love the place. It is like going to France without getting on a plane. But, the French-Canadian men, and probably now women, are very aggressive drivers. The aggressiveness even came out on bike trails. One day we rode to Montmorency Chute, about 10 miles from Quebec City, and on the way back I had all these testosterone loaded young guys passing me with their girlfriends just "panting" trying to keep up on their own bikes.

Good luck with the legislation. I also support restricted licensing for 16 year old drivers.

Ron Friedel

Readers hop on bandwagon for crackdown on



Zaleski

Should Wisconsin get tough with the dimwits who drive too slowly in the passing lane? Would fining them anywhere from \$30 to \$300 — as proposed by Rep. John La Fave, D-Milwaukee — get their attention and, in the process, alleviate much of the congestion during rush hour?

Or is it unfair to go after the passing lane dimwits when there are so many other freeway menaces out there?

Several weeks ago, I posed those questions in this column and asked readers to send me their

own views on the subject. Thirteen people responded, 11 of whom said they support La Fave's bill. Space limitations do not allow me to run all the responses. But here are some of the more thought-provoking:

Rob,
Prior to moving to Madison in 1977, I lived in Chicago all my life. Never had I seen drivers like we have here. Speeders and tailgaters are the worst offenders, followed by those who put their turn signals on at the last possible moment — if at all.

I'm not a chauvinist, but it seems the ones who zip past me on the Beltline most often are young females who don't have a

Is it unfair to go after the passing lane dimwits when there are so many other freeway menaces out there?

clue just how dangerous a situation they're creating.
Al Burescu, Madison
Zaleski — I've noticed the same thing. Sadly, the macho mentality apparently is contagious. If and when women start joining the NRA in droves, we're doomed.

Rob,
Yes, I support Rep. La Fave's bill. Why? Because we need to expect more from Wisconsin drivers. A message needs to be sent to our citizens that they should pay more attention while driving. Though Wisconsin's highway death rates are generally below countrywide averages, they still aren't as low as those of states that have the most attentive drivers — California, Colorado, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Maryland, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode

bad drivers

Please pass the bill. There are signs posted that say "Slower Traffic Keep Right." We get fined when we don't obey stop signs. The selfish act of hanging in the left lane causes conscientious drivers to become dangerous drivers (i.e., being forced to pass on the right).

I moved here from Maine. A great percentage of that state is rural, but even they understand the concept that "others have places to go and might want to get there faster than me." The way people drive in this state is the one thing I hate about living here.

Renee Fabry, Madison
P.S. You realize these people would all be dead if they pulled this crap on the autobahn.
Zaleski — Or at Daytona.

Rob,
My understanding of La Fave's proposal is that you could be fined for driving the speed limit in the left lane. That's dimwit legislation if you ask me. I believe if you're driving the speed limit in the left lane, you should be able to continue driving in the left lane.

Too many people are killed and seriously injured on our highways, all in the name of getting from point A to point B a little faster. Haven't you heard, speed kills? And if it doesn't kill, it can make an awful mess.

Adam (last name withheld by request), Madison
Zaleski — I take it you've never driven on the autobahn? In any event, La Fave says technically you're right. Under his bill, one could be arrested for cruising in the left lane even if doing the speed limit — providing a state trooper determines you've been blocking traffic for at least one

However, the bill's intent is to go after bona fide slowpokes — 50 mph or less — who habitually hang out in the passing lane, he emphasizes. He also favors following the lead of Texas, which replaced its "Slower Traffic Keep Right" signs with ones saying, "Keep Right Except to Pass."

Rob,
That was a very courageous article. You made a couple statements that I have never seen in print in the local media. The first was, "It's merely a symptom of a much larger problem: Too many people." The second comes a little later: "But thanks to the pro-growth advocates . . . our population is exploding at the seams." You couldn't have said it any better.

Island and Washington (according to National Safety Council statistics).

There was a figure bounced around in the automotive press several years ago that quoted a study that suggested urban congestion would be reduced by 17 percent if drivers obeyed the "left lane for passing only" ethic. This suggests that greater awareness of lane discipline could have a significant effect on pollution and quality of life measures.

Jay Weiss, Madison
Zaleski — So true. Now imagine how all our lives would improve if cell phones were banned.

Rob,

Of course, pointing out the problem and having something done about it are two different things. Can you imagine (County Executive Kathleen) Falk or (Madison Mayor Sue) Bauman saying "Enough is enough, no more growth in Dane County or Madison"? It would be political suicide.

Something that might slow things down a bit would be to raise the price of gasoline to \$3 a gallon. Maybe it would get a few of those monster SUVs off the road. A more practical idea might be to reduce the bus fares in Madison to some ridiculously low figure — say, 25 cents. Then you could have the bus system and other forms of mass transit — commuter rail? — supported by a wheel tax by the people who are too good to use mass transit.

Clifford Voegeli, Madison
Zaleski — I like it, I like it. That's assuming, of course, that someone finally figures out how the new bus system works.