LEGISLATIVE "UPDATE" (Continued From Page 6.)

Senate Bill 400 (G. Hunt) would require that anyone (driver, parent or guardian) transporting a child weighing less than 20 pounds properly secure the young one in an approved child passenger restraint device. In addition, if the child is under 15 years old (and weighing 20 pounds or more), he or she must be restrained by the vehicle's safety belt. The bill also provides that beginning January 1, 1981, children who weigh less than 40 pounds shall be properly secured in an approved child passenger restraint device.

Finally, Senate Bill 451 (O'Brient and Frueht), would require that effective January 1, 1980, school buses would have to be equipped with safety belts for the drivers and each passenger.

All of these bills, with one exception, are in the Senate Committee on Transportation & Tourist Industry and have not yet received a formal hearing. The exception is Senate Bill 394, which is presently in the Senate Finance Committee. No action is expected on any of these bills for sometime this fall.

Four measures have been introduced to restrict Michigan's Transportation long-standing motorcycle helmet law. The bills are SB 345 6 366 and HB 4406 6 4497. (The Senate and House bills are identical.) The Senate bills have been referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee and the House bills are in the Public Safety Committee. No hearings on any of the four have been so far.

One other recent item of interest is Senate Bill 311 (Holmes), which proposes to require all motorcycles with "a device" to prevent it from going faster than 70 MPH. Your guess is as good as the one he has.

Tom Reel, Legislative Committee

MICHIGANE
OFFICIAL PUBLICATION
VOLUME 14 NUMBER 3 FALL 1979

MICHIGAN SECTION
INSTITUTE OF TRANSPORTATION ENGINEERS

PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

I would like to bring you up to date on our activities in regard to making the Michigan Section ITE more "visible". Our efforts in the three committees that have met with success. The recent display of child restraint material at a City of Troy Shopping Center received a great deal of public attention and interest, and I wish to thank those section members who donated their time to making this effort a success. The Executive Board also sent a resolution to the State Legislature supporting SB 400, the comprehensive bill which is included in this issue of the Michiganite.

Our Public Relations Committee has been very active, by providing information the various news media on the subject of child restraint devices and the proper use of seat belts. If any member has additional subjects which deserve statewide public attention, please contact Weldon Byrum, Chairman of the Public Relations Committee.

On another subject, the Michigan Section Executive Board has appointed a committee to work with the Michigan Department of Transportation and the Michigan State Police to develop a plan to incorporate the revision of the Michigan Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices. If any member has comments on additions or changes, please bring them to my attention as soon as possible.

Also, just recently each voting member received a copy of a proposed change in our By-Laws which would add a Director to the Executive Board. This Director would represent our Affiliate members and add input in the area of programs and policies which would benefit the entire portion of our membership. Such an important change deserves our support.

Gerald M. Holnberg 1979 President

NATIONAL STUDY SHOWS RIGHT TURN ON RED LAW CUTS ACCIDENTS AND SAVES GAS

The Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) is asking all cities, villages and counties to re-examine the need for "No Turn On Red" signs placed at some intersections. The request is in the context of a national study that reveals right turns on red reduce the total number of accidents and save motorists time and fuel.

The study, conducted for the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, showed that the total number of rear-end collisions, side-swipes, right-angle collisions and vehicles running off the road, decreased an average 12.6 to 11.9 percent per year, per intersection, after the installation of right turns on red. It also showed that the average motorist saves six seconds driving time for every turn on red which could average out to a fuel savings of about one-thirtieth of a gallon per hour's time.

"That may not sound like much," says Donald Dray, engineering of MDOT's Traffic and Safety Division and chairman of the national task force that did the study, "but just in Michigan, that averages out to a fuel savings of 10 and one-half million gallons each year."

Michigan adopted turns on red in 1976. Although all 50 states have done so, Michigan is one of the few states also to adopt left turn control on a one-way road when the light is red.

"On the national level, the right-turn-on-red showed a significant decrease in accidents," Ome said. "Here in Michigan, however, the law has not been in existence long enough to get an accurate assessment - motorists are still adjusting to it."

"While Michigan has shown essentially no change in the number of accidents, we are predicting a significant decrease in the future."

TRAFFIC ENGINEERS WORKSHOPS AT NATIONAL SAFETY CONGRESS

The Michigan Section ITE will have two workshops at the National Safety Congress in Chicago. Each workshop is totally devoted to traffic engineers and will be presented by a traffic engineer. Both workshops will be held on Wednesday, October 10, 1979.

"Traffic Engineers at Work" will be presented by John T. Fay Jr. and will cover the responsibilities of the traffic engineer. It will provide the opportunity for traffic engineers to share ideas and concerns.

"Traffic Engineering during Road Construction" will be presented by Richard L. Topp and will cover the traffic engineer's responsibilities during road construction.

Both workshops will provide 2 hours of credit toward professional registration.
CHILD SAFETY RESTRAINTS PUSHED BY SECTION ACTION

The Michigan Section ITE public information booth on child automobile safety seats was presented at Oakland Mall in Troy, Michigan on August 11-12. The booth contained examples of approved car seats and various handout materials including a babys' guide. In addition, a drawing was held to give away a child seat that was donated by the Section.

The Public Information booth was manned by members of the Michigan Section during the hours of mall operation. Special thanks go to the following members for their assistance:

David Allyn
Richard Bumbour
Tara Brennan
Howard Coox
John Croupe
Robert DeCorte
Mark Fisk

Prior to the information booth, news releases were sent to the various local newspapers and radio and television stations. From this release, articles on the booth appeared in five local newspapers and there was coverage by a Detroit television station WJHL-TV. As a result of this publicity, there were numerous inquiries of parents indicating that they had seen the newspaper articles and had come to the mall that day to specifically view the booth.

In all, it is estimated that approximately 300-400 people viewed the booth during the two days of operation. The public information program served two useful purposes: 1) Literature on what are safe child restraint systems were distributed to the public and 2) The ITE received much favorable publicity both through the newspaper and TV coverage as well as the visibility to the public at the booth.

Again, thanks to the members who took time from their schedule to assist in this program, and OHSF, Secretary of State Office and AAA which provided much of the material used at the booth.

Richard A. Grand
Chairman, Transportation Safety Committee

Once past the first critical days of life, injuries suffered while riding in automobiles are responsible for the deaths of more young children than any single disease or other type of accident.

In Michigan during the two years of 1977 and 1978, 45 child passengers under the age of five years were killed and an estimated 34,000 to 32,000 more were injured. In the same two-year period, 92 children between the ages of five and 15 years were killed while riding as passengers, and an additional 18,000 were injured.

Accident studies have indicated that the use of child restraints can almost eliminate the chance of serious or fatal injury to children riding in cars. These studies have also indicated that the use of seat belts by the children in the five to 15 year age group reduces the chances of fatal injury by at least 80 percent and the chance of serious injury by 64 percent.

Given the dimensions of this threat to the health of our children, the proven effectiveness of the countermeasures, and the fact that children must be dependent on adults for protection, we are convinced that the most reliable method of getting parents to adequately protect their children is through the enactment of restraint usage legislation. Therefore, the Michigan Section of the Institute of Transportation Engineers recommends that the legislature vote to enact Senate Bill 400.
LEGISLATIVE "UPDATE"

Several bills have been introduced during the current session on topics of particular interest to the membership.

Thus far, Senate Bill 471 (Hertel) has seen the most activity. On July 6th the amended bill was adopted by the Senate on a close 20-13 vote. The modified bill would not only impose penalty "points" on the driving record of convicted violators of the 55 MPH speed limit including a "declared emergency" , but as amended, would impose a 1 point penalty at all times, regardless of whether or not an emergency had been declared. The bill now moves to the House for consideration.

Three bills dealing with "occupant restraints" have also been introduced, although none have seen any action to date.

Senate Bill 394 (Kelly) would provide up to a $50 tax credit for anyone (parent or guardian) who purchases an approved infant or child restraint (seat).

Senate Bill 395 (G. Hart) would require safety belt use by "each driver and front passenger of a motor vehicle."

There are several categories to this bill. It is directed at "adults." Also, no points would be assessed for a violation and if the driver is "chronically disabled," the violation is not considered evidence of contributory negligence nor will it limit liability of an insured.

The proposition has a bit of a sunset clause -- it expires 3 years after it takes effect.

The current proposal is the most comprehensive and makes high belt use mandatory. A version was also introduced in the House, designed for "occupant restraints." This bill is currently being considered by the House committee.

At the outset of the session, a "serious" version was introduced by Senator Hertel (SB 471). This bill amends the current point rating system to include a penalty for failing to use a seat belt. The bill also includes provisions for mandatory use of seat belts, and imposes penalties for violations. The bill was passed by the Senate and is currently pending in the House. It is expected to be reviewed and modified before being passed.

The bill has been endorsed by a number of organizations, including the Michigan State Police and the American Automobile Association. It is hoped that the bill will be signed into law by the governor, and will become effective on a staggered basis, beginning with commercial vehicles and moving on to private vehicles.

The legislation aims to improve road safety by encouraging the use of seat belts, which are known to significantly reduce the risk of injury in the event of a collision.

The bill has faced opposition from some who argue that mandatory seat belt use would infringe on individual freedom. However, supporters argue that the benefits of reduced injuries and fatalities outweigh the potential concerns.

The bill is expected to be signed into law by the governor, and will become effective on a staggered basis, beginning with commercial vehicles and moving on to private vehicles.
SCANDI SYSTEM ABOUT A YEAR AWAY FOR FREEWAY MOTORISTS

In about a year, motorists on 32.5 miles of freeways in the city will be served by the first stage of the Surveillance, Control and Driver Information System (SCANDI), a $10.3 million project of the Michigan Dept. of Transportation.

About 40% of the total project presently consists of the hardwired telecommunications system, headed by Smith, MDOT's project engineer in charge of construction, with the bulk of the project to be finished by the end of the year. Debugging of the computer center, the largest of its kind in the world, and the testing of applications software will be required. Preliminary experiments are expected to result in the completion of the system by Spring 1980.

INCREASE FREEWAY EFFICIENCY

MDOT's Detriot Freeway Operations Unit has been given the assignment of studying, administering, implementing, operating, and providing for the continuous updating of the SCANDI project.

Herbert Coma, MDOT's supervising engineer in charge of the freeway program, explained in a recent interview that the goal of the SCANDI project is to increase the efficiency of the metropolitan freeway system by reducing traffic congestion.

"The purpose of SCANDI is essentially to monitor freeway traffic flow rates, detect any unusual traffic patterns, and to speed the response of various agencies (police, fire, and others) to reduce an as quickly as possible the source of congestion," he said. Pointing to an illustration showing MDOT's six-level classification of freeway traffic congestion and analysis of traffic flow rates, he explained that situations occur where traffic demand exceeds freeway capacity, or when incidents such as an accident, debris partially blocking a lane, and so forth, impose temporary restrictions on the freeway traffic capacity in the immediate vicinity of the problem. By means of the video monitoring system, the cameras will allow for visual confirmation and additional data of information provided by the loops.

In addition to points of traffic congestion, the SCANDI surveillance system is capable of detecting other situations, such as the presence of a large truck on a bridge. When the truck is detected, the video monitoring system automatically contacts the appropriate law enforcement agency, which has the capability to shut down the bridge.

"Traffic may be rerouted or other traffic patterns altered," he said. "In addition, the system can be used to detect any unusual traffic conditions, such as a large number of vehicles on a particular route, or an unusually large number of vehicles on a particular lane of a freeway."