

ANDERSON VALLEY COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT

P. O. Box 398 – 14281 Highway 128

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Directors: Seat 1: Valerie Hanelt, Chair
Seat 2: Kathleen McKenna
Seat 3: Kirk Wilder
Seat 4: Joanne Clark
Seat 5: Paul Soderman

District Manager:
Fire Chief:
Airport Manager:
Airport Committee Chair:
Recreation Committee Chair:
District Secretary:

Joy Andrews
Andres Avila
Kirk Wilder
Jerry Bowers
Linnea Totten
Patty Liddy

Mendocino County Board of Supervisors
501 Low Gap Rd.
Ukiah, CA 95482

January 18th, 2017

Dear Supervisors and Caltrans,

Thank you for this opportunity to comment on the proposed changes to the speed limit in Philo, California.

As you may know the current speed limit was set in the aftermath of a tragic accident in which a child was killed and a mother seriously injured while attempting to cross the street in downtown Philo. At that time Caltrans held a well-attended public hearing in Philo where Caltrans heard about the unique traffic safety issues in Philo and subsequently set the current 30mph speed limit.

Although traffic and surrounding conditions in downtown Philo have changed somewhat since that time, there are still a number of current and future safety hazards which should be considered over and above the simple fact that some drivers do not observe the posted speed limit as apparently observed in the latest Caltrans speed zone survey. These hazards include: school buses picking up and dropping off school children in the morning and afternoon, new tasting rooms in the downtown area with associated pedestrians, poor visibility entering the town in either direction, southbound vehicles stopping to make left turns into Lemons' Market, cars parked near the roadway on both sides of the street creating obstacles and restricting maneuvering room, and so on.

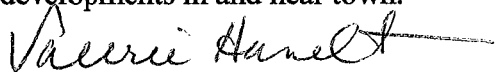
In addition, there are new commercial and residential developments planned for the area which will increase traffic and associated hazards, both in Philo and in the approaches to Philo from the north and south.

We appreciate Caltrans installation of radar speed indicators which have certainly helped to reduce speeding through town and we agree that lowering the speed limit to 45mph in the areas of Highway 128 approaching Philo would make the area safer. (However, we have not seen

C: BOS, CEO, C & C

exactly how far that 45mph zone would extend.). But we believe that a corresponding increase in the downtown speed limit would effectively sanction greater speeds through town increasing the risk of another tragic accident.

The current speed limit was set after a public hearing in Philo in response to a high level of public safety concern where Caltrans was able to take a full range of public input. In addition, we are concerned that the proposed changes have not been adequately noticed in the Philo area (with postings at the local stores and Post Office, for example) nor with sufficient advance notice. Therefore, since there is no need to rush into this change, and in light of the spirit of the "public hearing" provision of the vehicle code, we request that no decision be made on any speed limit changes in Philo until after a public hearing in Philo where the concerns of the public can be factored into the decision and proper consideration can be given to future developments in and near town.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Valerie Hanelt", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Valerie Hanelt, Chair
Anderson Valley Community Services District

cc: Caltrans District One