



Matthew W. Daus, Esq.

President, International Association of Transportation Regulators

<http://iatr.global/>

***Transportation Technology Chair, City University of New York,
Transportation Research Center at The City College of New York***

<http://www.utrc2.org/>

Partner and Chairman, Windels Marx Transportation Practice Group

<http://windelsmarx.com>

Contact: mdaus@windelsmarx.com

156 West 56th Street | New York, NY 10019

T. 212.237.1106 | F. 212.262.1215

The Speed Revolution: How Speed-Limiter Laws & Technology Are the Next Regulatory Frontier for Road Safety

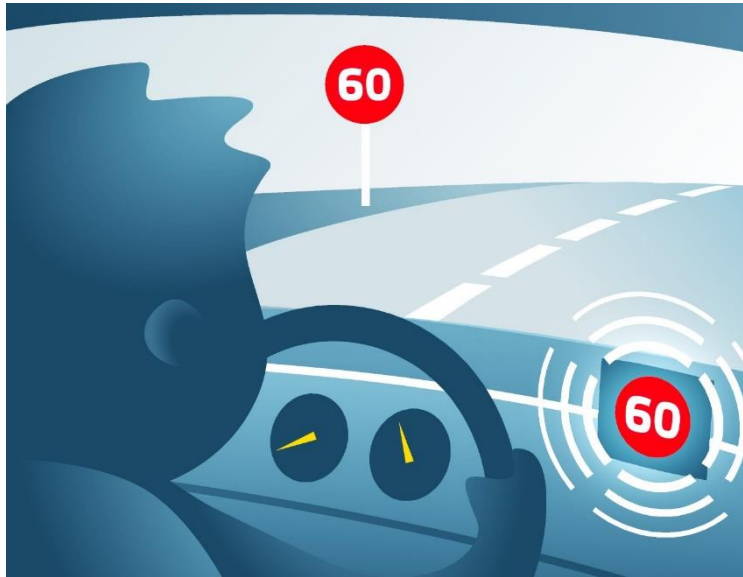
The Safety-Tech Shift Taxis Can't Ignore



Speed kills. That truth is what's driving a new wave of regulatory actions across the United States, focused on reducing high-risk driving behavior using technology. Among the most talked-about interventions is the rollout of speed-limiting systems, ranging from telematics to passive driver warning systems to Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA). A convergence of state legislation, federal rulemaking, and growing public sentiment means speed-limiting mandates could soon reshape the regulatory and operational landscape for fleets of all sizes.

This article explores the emerging policies, technologies, and legal challenges that operators and drivers must prepare for now. While the taxi and for-hire vehicle (FHV) sectors have faced numerous tech and compliance shifts in recent years, the implications of speed-limiter laws could prove particularly transformative or disruptive.

How Speed-Limiting Systems Work



There are three main types of speed-limiting systems, each with different implications for fleet operations:¹

Passive Systems: These generate visual and audio alerts when a vehicle exceeds the speed limit by a defined threshold (*e.g.*, 10 mph). These are less invasive and relatively inexpensive but do not have as significant an impact on reducing road fatalities as more advanced systems do.

Speed Governors: These include physical speed limiters or throttle governors that prevent the driver from exceeding a programmed speed. They offer more ability to restrict speed than passive systems, but they are not as effective in ensuring compliance with local speed limits and may raise more operational concerns for drivers in certain industries.

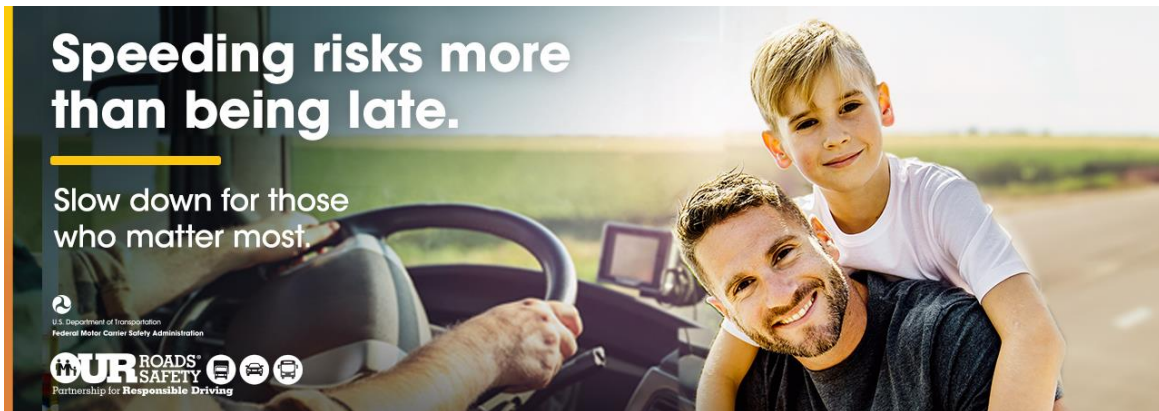
Intelligent Speed Assistance (ISA): This system uses GPS, digital maps, and/or onboard cameras to determine real-time speed limits and actively prevent speeding or exceeding a threshold above the speed limit. In the EU, ISA is now mandatory for all new vehicles as of July 2024, setting a precedent that U.S. lawmakers may increasingly cite.²

Fleet operators exploring these systems must consider hardware and installation costs, integration with existing telematics platforms, driver acceptance, and data-sharing policies. Many vendors are now offering turnkey ISA solutions with compliance tracking dashboards and over-the-air updates, tailored for both light-duty and commercial vehicles.

¹ <https://www.nsc.org/getmedia/c6c7e752-c580-40a1-81d3-540fda083153/rtz-isa-presentation-richardson012324.pdf?srsId=AfmBOocSigbvAZsfAr-XUg1zZLjZ60k3rHW-dx8Dep-yHJJa9KM064>

² <https://usa.streetsblog.org/2024/07/01/three-ways-america-could-import-europes-new-speed-limiter-law>

FMCSA and the Federal Agenda



At the federal level, the most significant development is the U.S. Department of Transportation's renewed focus on speed-limiting rules for commercial vehicles. The Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA) has been developing a proposed rule that would mandate speed limiters in commercial vehicles weighing more than 26,000 pounds. Initially introduced in 2016, in 2022, the FMCSA published an advance notice of supplemental proposed rulemaking, and the prior administration anticipated the actual SPRM being released in May 2025.³

While the current scope primarily focuses on heavy-duty trucks, this framework has the potential to expand to include other commercial vehicle classes, especially as states and cities begin to craft their speed-related mandates. This potential expansion in regulatory scope could evolve over time to include other federally-regulated passenger ground transportation modes such as buses, motorcoaches, and luxury limousines.

There is also resistance to speed limiter rules. The U.S. House of Representatives is advancing H.R. 2819, the Deregulating Restrictions on Interstate Vehicles and Eighteen-wheelers, or "DRIVE," Act.⁴ Sponsored by Rep. Josh Brecheen (R-OK-2), the bill, introduced in April 2025, seeks to prohibit the FMCSA from mandating speed-limiting devices on certain vehicles, citing concerns over operational limitations and driver autonomy, arguing federal overreach into vehicle operation is unwarranted and burdensome. As of mid-2025, the bill remains in committee. This debate evolving around ISA underscores the high stakes of this issue and the polarized views around technological enforcement in transportation.

³ <https://truckstop.com/blog/speed-limiter-law/>

⁴ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/2819/all-actions?overview=closed#tabs>

State-Led Innovations



Washington State Governor Bob Ferguson signs House Bill 1596, also known as the BEAM Act, into law on Monday, May 12, 2025

Even as the federal process inches forward, state and local governments are moving faster. These new laws mainly focus on the use of speed-limiting technology as applied to habitually reckless drivers or so-called “super speeders” as opposed to the federal government’s current focus on heavier commercial vehicles. This methodology often reduces industry opposition as it is not as universal or subject to federal rules.

Washington, D.C., became the first U.S. jurisdiction to pass legislation mandating ISA installation for repeat speeding offenders. The law, D.C. Law 25-161, officially titled the Strengthening Traffic Enforcement, Education, and Responsibility (STEER) Amendment Act of 2024, requires drivers with excessive violations to install a GPS-linked system that audibly warns or limits vehicle speed relative to posted limits.⁵ The policy, hailed by the FIA Foundation as a groundbreaking model for urban safety,⁶ could soon become a reference point for other U.S. cities and states.

Virginia lawmakers followed suit with legislation that empowers judges to order speed-limiting devices for habitual speeders. Virginia House Bill 2096, passed in April 2025, establishes the Intelligent Speed Assistance Program as an alternative to license suspension for certain high-speed and reckless driving offenses.⁷ The program requires the installation of ISA systems in vehicles registered to the participant and includes penalties for tampering with these systems. The law takes effect on July 1, 2026.

⁵ <https://code.dccouncil.gov/us/dc/council/laws/25-161>

⁶ <https://www.fiafoundation.org/news/first-us-intelligent-speed-assist-legislation-passed-supported-by-fia-foundation>

⁷ <https://legiscan.com/VA/bill/HB2096/2025>

California lawmakers are attempting an even bolder approach. California Assembly Bill AB981 would mandate that individuals with prior serious driving violations install ISA devices and pay a state-imposed fee to cover the technology.⁸ The bill also outlines a fee schedule to be adopted by certified ISA manufacturers. While not adopted this session, the bill will be re-examined when the new session convenes.

Georgia House Bill HB308 would have added another layer to this growing national trend. It proposed amendments to Title 40 of the state's motor vehicle code to include ISA provisions for specific categories of high-risk drivers.⁹ However, HB308 was vetoed by Governor Brian Kemp in May 2025. While he acknowledged the bill's good intentions, particularly its focus on curbing reckless stunt driving, he cited concerns that the punishment and related enforcement infrastructure would not be applied consistently.¹⁰

Maryland's HB1139, meanwhile, proposes an ISA pilot program for drivers who accrue license suspension points.¹¹ The bill would require affected individuals to participate in the program, obtain a restricted license from the Motor Vehicle Administration, and operate only vehicles equipped with intelligent speed assistance systems. Drivers would be prohibited from violating the requirements of the program. As of June 2025, the bill remains in committee.

In Washington State, Governor Bob Ferguson recently signed the BEAM Act, which would require ISA for drivers who have previously had their licenses suspended for excessive speeding, starting in 2029.¹² The bill is named after the four victims who died in a crash in Renton in March 2024: Andrea Hudson, 38; Boyd Buster Brown, 12; Matilda Wilcoxson, 13; and 12-year-old Eloise Wilcoxson. Between 2019 and 2023, fatal crashes involving a speeding driver increased by 40% in Washington. Over the same period, speeding tickets for motorists driving more than 50 mph have increased by 200%. In general, the Washington State speed limit is 25 mph on city and town streets, 50 mph on county roads, and 60 mph on state highways.¹³

⁸ <https://legiscan.com/CA/bill/AB981/2025>

⁹ <https://legiscan.com/GA/bill/HB308/2025>

¹⁰ <https://www.13wmaz.com/article/news/local/georgia/a-look-at-bills-georgia-governor-brian-kemp-vetoed-before-they-could-pass/93-cf976290-7d5d-44e9-a92d-4ba0171a3713>

¹¹ <https://legiscan.com/MD/bill/SB993/2025>

¹² <https://app.leg.wa.gov/billsummary?BillNumber=1596&Year=2025&Initiative=false>,
<https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2025/may/12/governor-signs-bill-to-require-speed-limiting-devi/>

¹³ <https://app.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=46.61.400>



NY State Senator Andrew Gounardes addresses a crowd at Brooklyn Borough Hall, alongside NYC Department of Transportation Commissioner Ydanis Rodriguez

New York’s Assembly Bill A2299C requires ISA devices for drivers who accrue 16 or more speeding violations within 24 months.¹⁴ This is among the more advanced proposals in the nation, and current estimates indicate it would affect approximately 18,000 drivers statewide. The NYC Department of Transportation has publicly endorsed the legislation, emphasizing its potential to save lives and complement the city’s broader Vision Zero strategy.¹⁵ Over the last two years, New York State’s legislature has discussed and revised legislation proposed by Senator Andrew Gounardes and Assemblymember Emily Gallagher (both of Brooklyn); this year, it was passed in the New York State Senate, but the legislation was not brought to the State Assembly for a vote prior to the end of the legislative session.

Separately, the NYC Department of Citywide Administrative Services (DCAS) has piloted ISA technology across city-owned vehicles since 2022, encompassing both passive and active systems. As of 2025, over 700 vehicles have been outfitted with ISA technology, and city officials have credited the program with reducing speeding by about 64%.¹⁶

These state initiatives vary in their implementation, but all signal a growing appetite for legislative tools to combat speeding using intelligent enforcement systems.

Legal and Operational Challenges

¹⁴ <https://www.nysenate.gov/legislation/bills/2025/A2299/amendment/B>

¹⁵ <https://gothamist.com/news/it-can-save-lives-nyc-dot-pushes-state-to-pass-super-speeders-bill-renew-speed-camera-program>

¹⁶ <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dcas/news/002-25/city-new-york-advances-fleet-safety-new-technologies-updated-vision-zero-plan-exceeds>

The legal picture is far from settled. A host of jurisdictional issues complicate the implementation of speed-limiting technology mandates beyond habitually dangerous drivers.

Preemption remains a major legal hurdle. Under 49 U.S.C. § 31141, the FMCSA may preempt state or local law that purports to regulate safety if it determines that such law has no safety benefit, that such law is incompatible with FMCSA safety regulation, or that such law would cause an unreasonable burden on interstate commerce.¹⁷

Fleet classification further complicates rulemaking. Taxis, for-hire vehicles (FHV), limousines, and app-based rideshare services fall under different regulatory frameworks depending on the jurisdiction. Laws that generically target “commercial vehicles” may inadvertently over-include small private businesses or under-include high-mileage FHVs that operate in quasi-commercial roles. For example, if New York imposed ISA requirements on registered livery vehicles, app-based rideshare drivers outside New York City, many of whom perform a comparable function, may be left out. Conversely, a blanket requirement for all non-personal vehicles could encompass small commercial vans and sole proprietors, who may not typically be subject to fleet-level safety mandates. The resulting gaps and overlaps can pose enforcement challenges and legal risk.

On the operational side, liability concerns for a widespread adoption of ISA will need to be addressed. If a speed-limiting device malfunctions, failing to slow a vehicle or erroneously limiting speed, the chain of responsibility is unclear. Questions could arise about whether blame lies with the driver, the fleet, the ISA software provider, or the vehicle manufacturer. To mitigate this risk, some proposals require override mechanisms to be built into all systems, but the legal standard for what constitutes a reasonable override remains unsettled for a national implementation. Ensuring that devices function properly under a wide range of conditions, including those with complex road infrastructure featuring underpasses and ramp speeds, or where traffic flow requires higher speeds, is both a technical and legal necessity.

The Path Forward: How Should the Passenger Ground Transportation Industry Get Ahead of the Curve in the ISA Road?

The road ahead for the commercial passenger vehicle sector is one of both responsibility and opportunity. Proactively responding to the shifting legal landscape will require education and effort. For fleet operators and industry leaders, this means engaging early and often in the policymaking process, submitting public comments, participating in pilot programs, and highlighting operational realities that should shape future mandates. Trade groups should build coalitions across sectors, aligning the interests of trucking, taxi, bus, limousine, and ride-hail services (transportation network companies/ TNCs) where possible.

One example of an industry that is ahead of the ISA curve is the bus and motor coach industry. Bus companies generally support the imposition of speed-limiting devices on buses because they already utilize these devices. In a 2015 survey of its members, the United

¹⁷ <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/sites/fmcsa.dot.gov/files/docs/safety/454941/fmcsa-legal-opinion-3-22-19.pdf>

Motorcoach Association (UMA) found widespread use of speed limiters, with 93.2% of survey respondents reporting such use. Both the American Bus Association (ABA) and UMA support the purpose of the speed limiter rulemaking – reducing the severity of crashes involving heavy vehicles – but both are reluctant to fully support mandatory speed limiters for buses. The ABA explains that it “is not opposed to the use of speed limiting devices, [but] it remains concerned about a mandate and the creation of additional safety risks, particularly at a time when traffic fatalities are already at a record level.” Instead, the ABA endorses continued voluntary adoption of speed-limiting devices and notes that within the motorcoach industry, use of such devices is already widespread. The UMA has concluded that there is insufficient scientific evidence to support establishing a compulsory use of speed limiting devices, and absent a scientific basis with measurable results, UMA cannot support such a rule. “UMA encourages comprehensive studies with definitive conclusions before pursuing further rulemaking.”^{18 19}

Technology adoption will be key. Investing in scalable, interoperable speed-monitoring solutions, especially those that integrate with existing telematics infrastructure, can help fleets stay ahead of compliance requirements. Equally important is setting up robust internal systems, including creating ISA usage protocols, training drivers and staff, preparing for override scenarios, and establishing procedures to handle hardware or software failures. Legal teams should be involved in assessing risks and helping to structure contracts with technology vendors to ensure effective management of these risks.

More broadly, for any nationalized adoption, the industry must push for rational, uniform rules that reflect the diversity of vehicle types and business models. This includes providing clear definitions of what constitutes a commercial vehicle, reasonable exemptions for low-capacity operators, and federal coordination to prevent a patchwork of conflicting rules. By taking an active role in shaping the regulatory conversation, the industry can help ensure that the focus of speed-limiting technology is to enhance road safety without hindering service.

Clear regulatory mandates can also help avoid labor classification issues. In most jurisdictions, the independent contractor (IC) model, rather than fleet ownership, is the dominant structure for many taxis, app-based FHV, and luxury limousine operations. This complicates compliance with speed-limiting mandates, as operators often do not directly control the vehicles. If cities or states require ISA installation as a licensing or operating condition, it allows companies to enforce technology standards across their platforms without opening themselves up to labor misclassification claims. In this way, ISA mandates can create a level regulatory playing field while simultaneously insulating companies from legal exposure in jurisdictions where labor classification remains a contentious issue. This approach mirrors earlier public policy efforts, such as drug testing and background check requirements, which have been successfully implemented without necessitating reclassification of drivers.

¹⁸ <https://www.fmcsa.dot.gov/regulations/docket-no-fmcsa-2022-0004-parts-and-accessories-necessary-safe-operations-speed>

¹⁹ <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FMCSA-2022-0004-15619>; <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FMCSA-2022-0004-15602>; <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FMCSA-2022-0004-15607>; and <https://www.regulations.gov/comment/FMCSA-2022-0004-15542>

ISA could also play a significant role in addressing the twin crises of traffic safety and commercial auto insurance. Many urban policymakers are actively working toward Vision Zero goals, aiming to eliminate traffic deaths by reducing speeding and other risky behaviors. Meanwhile, commercial auto insurance rates, especially in the taxi and FHV sectors, have skyrocketed due to increased litigation, higher medical costs, and fewer underwriters willing to take on risk.²⁰ By reducing the likelihood and severity of crashes, ISA has the potential to lower claim frequency and payouts, making drivers and fleets less expensive to insure. Early pilot programs, such as New York City’s municipal fleet ISA rollout, have demonstrated significant reductions in speeding violations, thereby improving safety and serving as proof of concept for insurers.²¹ If supported by data, ISA adoption could become a bargaining tool for operators seeking more affordable coverage or better underwriting terms in a challenging market. As insurance affordability becomes a critical issue for the industry, ISA may provide one of the few tangible ways to demonstrate risk mitigation and boost the bottom line.

While speed-limiting technology is not yet mandatory for all taxis and FHV, the direction of travel seems clear. What began as a niche trucking policy is evolving into a broader safety initiative with implications for every fleet and ground transportation operation on the road.

The ground passenger transport industry should view Intelligent Speed Assistance not as a far-off or sector-specific issue, but as a rapidly-approaching reality with direct implications for daily operations, liability, compliance, and customer safety. Whether you're a taxi owner navigating city streets, a luxury limousine operator serving high-speed corridors, a bus company aiming to reduce crash risk, or an FHV fleet owner or driver managing one or more vehicles, the rise of speed-limiting mandates presents both a regulatory challenge and a strategic opportunity. Early adoption of these technologies and engagement with policymakers can position operators as leaders in safety and innovation, while also helping to avoid disruptive, one-size-fits-all mandates in the future. As the push to lower traffic fatalities and reckless driving intensifies, speed control will no longer be optional – it will become a core part of how vehicles are regulated, rated, and trusted.

²⁰ <https://utrc2.org/publications/nyc-taxi-hire-vehicle-insurance-crisis-root-causes-solutions>

²¹ <https://www.nyc.gov/site/dcas/news/002-25/city-new-york-advances-fleet-safety-new-technologies-updated-vision-zero-plan-exceeds>