



Date: August 8, 2006

To: Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Bonnie Lowenthal, Vice Mayor *BL*
Rae Gabelich, Eighth District Councilmember *RG*

Subject: **Support of AB 1324 (Vargas): Vehicles: school pedestrian-bicyclist safety program.**

Fines for motor vehicle violations, such as speeding in school zones, are specified in the California State Vehicle Code. Legislation must pass on the State level in order for counties and municipalities to increase the fines within their boundaries.

AB 1324 would allow cities in Los Angeles and San Diego Counties, including the City of Long Beach, to establish a school pedestrian-bicyclist safety program and increase the fines for a designated vehicle violation occurring within a specially posted school safety zone. The fines received would fund programs that enhance the safety of pupils traveling to and from school on foot or by bicycle.

Existing law allows such programs in Alameda County, Santa Barbara County, Ventura County, or in any city in those counties.

Long Beach has an outstanding record of commitment to the safety of our schoolchildren. Most recently, the School Crossing Guard Program has undergone extensive review to ensure efficiency and effectiveness. During the review of the program, optimization efforts lead to a new crossing location, improvements in communication between the crossing guards and the Police Department supervisors, coordination of bus and location schedules, and coordination of locations when construction occurs or traffic signals become inoperable.

The City should continue ensuring the safety of schoolchildren as they walk or bike to and from school by supporting AB 1324; and upon its passage increasing fines for motor vehicle violations within school zones, and applying those fines for additional safety programs.

Recommendation:

I respectfully request that the City Manager prepare and send a letter to the California legislature in formal support of the proposed legislation.