

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY, JUSTICE, AND  
PUBLIC SAFETY

11/19/2024-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE FLOOR

11/12/2024-AMENDED AND REPORTED OUT TO THE COMMITTEE ON RULES AND JUDICIARY

**BILL NO. 35-0271**

**Thirty-Fifth Legislature of the Virgin Islands**

**May 31, 2024**

An Act amending title 20 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 43, subchapter I by adding a section 494b establishing school speed zones, signage, and enforcement measures to promote student and pedestrian safety near schools

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**PROPOSED BY:** Senators Angel L. Bolques, Jr., and Milton E. Potter

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1       **WHEREAS**, the safety of students and pedestrians is of the utmost concern in school  
2 zones where there is traffic from motorcars, trucks, motorcycles, and busses;

3       **WHEREAS**, the single primary cause of accidents is vehicles exceeding speed limits in  
4 the school zones;

5       **WHEREAS**, a collaboration between the Virgin Islands Department of Education and  
6 the Virgin Islands Police Department can establish speed limits for each school, to promote  
7 safety to be known as school speed zones;

8       **WHEREAS**, the proper signage in the school zones can alert drivers of the appropriate  
9 speed limits and establish a school speed zone;

10       **WHEREAS**, the Virgin Islands Police Department shall enforce the proper speed limits  
11 in the school speed zones;

1           **WHEREAS**, the Department of Education and the Virgin Islands Police Department  
2 shall initiate a public education campaign to promote school speed zone safety; Now,  
3 Therefore,

4 ***Be it enacted by the Legislature of the Virgin Islands:***

5           **SECTION 1.** Title 20 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 43 is amended by adding a  
6 subchapter III to read as follows:

7 **“Subchapter III. School Speed Zone and Enforcement Act**

8           **§ 531.** This subchapter may be cited as the “School Speed Zone and Enforcement Act.”

9           **§ 532. Definitions**

10           As used in this subchapter, unless the context requires otherwise:

11           (1) “School Speed Zone” means a designated area within a specified distance from a  
12 school property boundary where vehicular speed limits are reduced below the standard limits  
13 for the road to enhance safety. These zones are active during specified hours that correspond  
14 to school operations, including but not limited to student arrival and departure times, and any  
15 other times when children are likely to be present.

16           (2) “School Zone Signage” means official signs erected by the Virgin Islands  
17 Department of Public Works after consultation with the Virgin Islands Police Department.  
18 These signs indicate the beginning and end of a school speed zone, the applicable speed limit  
19 within the zone, and the hours of operation. The design, placement, and maintenance of these  
20 signs shall adhere to the standards established by the Virgin Islands Department of Public  
21 Works and any applicable federal guidelines.

22           (3) “Pedestrian” means any person traveling on foot, wheelchair, bicycle, riding on an  
23 electric personal assistive device or similar means of non-vehicular movement, who may be  
24 using the roadway, sidewalks, crosswalks, or any paths adjacent to a school property within a  
25 school speed zone.

1 **§ 533. Establishment of School Speed Zones**

2 The Department of Education in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Police Department  
3 and the Virgin Islands Department of Public Works shall establish the boundaries for each  
4 school to determine its school speed zones. School speed zones must:

5 (1) be established in proximity to schools to enhance the safety of students and  
6 pedestrians during school hours and other designated times; and

7 (2) be established based on assessment that considers the following criteria:

8 (i) The proximity of school buildings to adjacent roadways;

9 (ii) Pedestrian and vehicular traffic patterns, including peak times coinciding  
10 with school hours;

11 (iii) Historical accident data and reported near-misses involving students and  
12 vehicles; and

13 (iv) Road geometry, visibility, and existing speed limits in the vicinity of schools.

14 **§ 534. Enforcement Measures**

15 The Virgin Islands Police Department, along with all P.O.S.T. certified peace  
16 officers, are responsible for enforcing the reduced speed limits within school speed zones.  
17 But law enforcement officers who are authorized to issue citations may issue a citation  
18 to a motorist who violates the school speed zone limit. The Virgin Islands Police  
19 Department shall provide adequate personnel for school speed zones as part of its traffic  
20 and monitoring duties. School speed zones will be enforced during each school hours,  
21 and during official school events that may occur outside regular school hours, including  
22 weekends. Official school events include school-related sporting events, after-school  
23 programs, summer school sessions, Parent-Teacher Conferences, graduation ceremonies,  
24 standardized testing, and Department of Education community events. Enforcement of

1 speed zones during official school events is to protect students, staff, and attendees at all  
2 official school events.

3 **§ 535. Penalties**

4 (a) Any person found to be in violation of the provisions of this section is subject to a  
5 civil penalty of \$500 for each infraction.

6 **§ 536. Fines; collection**

7 Thirty-three and one-third percent of the fines collected from school zone speeding  
8 violations must be allocated to the Virgin Islands Police Department for traffic safety education  
9 programs, and improvements in school zone safety infrastructure and the remaining 33.3  
10 percent of the fines shall to the Department of Education to be used exclusively for career  
11 technical education schools, programs, or courses and 33.4 percent must be deposited into the  
12 District Public Road Fund.

13 **§ 537. Department of Education Department of Public Works and Virgin Islands Police**  
14 **Department continuing obligations**

15 The Virgin Islands Police Department shall use all available technology including  
16 speed cameras and radar to enforce school zone speed limits. The Department of  
17 Education, in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Police Department, shall conduct  
18 periodic reviews of school zone safety measures and propose adjustments as necessary  
19 and shall disseminate communication with the public about the penalties for speeding in  
20 school zones. The Department of Public Works shall erect and replace signage, install  
21 and maintain flashing lights, maintain crosswalks and the school speed zone  
22 infrastructure.

23 **SECTION 2.** Title 20 Virgin Islands Code, chapter 43, subchapter I, section 512 is  
24 amended by adding a new provision to the Schedule of Fees as follows:

25 (a) Schedule of Fees for Speeding Violations in School Zones:

VIC	Violation Description	1st Offense Fee	2nd Offense Fee	3rd Offense Fee
T.20, 535	Exceeding speed limit in school zones	\$500.00	\$1,000.00	\$1,500.00

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2           **SECTION 3.** (a) The sum of \$500,000 is appropriated in the fiscal year ending  
3 September 30, 2025, from the Transportation Trust Fund to Virgin Islands Department of  
4 Public Works to implement and administer the provisions of this act, including signage  
5 installation and public education campaigns.

6           (b) The funds must be exclusively used for the purchase and installation of signage to  
7 designate school speed zones at all public, private and parochial schools and early learning  
8 centers within the Virgin Islands, to include speed limit signs, pedestrian crossing signs,  
9 flashing warning lights, and any other signage necessary to effectively implement the “School  
10 Speed Zone and Enforcement Act.”

11           (c) The Department of Public Works, in collaboration with the Virgin Islands Police  
12 Department are responsible for determining the specific signage needs for each school based  
13 on the criteria established.

14           (d) The Virgin Islands Police Department shall determine speed limits for school speed  
15 zones. Reduced speed limits must be established during designated hours, such as arrival and  
16 dismissal times. The timeframes during which the reduced speed limits are enforced must be  
17 clearly communicated through signage and other public outreach efforts.

18           (e) School speed zone signage must:

19           (1) be installed in a visible and conspicuous manner to indicate the presence of  
20 school speed zones;

21           (2) include the designated reduced speed limit and any additional information  
22 necessary to inform motorists of the school zone boundaries; and



1 include penalties for speeding violations within these zones, with the dual aim of deterrence  
2 and raising awareness about the importance of adhering to speed limits to protect school  
3 communities.

4 **BR23-0615/April 4, 2024/CBM**

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8 [\(REVISED\) DRAFTED ON YELLOW.docx](#)