

TO: Representative Amanda Price, Chair
House Committee on Local Government

FROM: Nancy J Ingalsbee

DATE: September 17, 2014

RE: HOUSE BILL 5730

My name is Nancy Ingalsbee and I live in Allegan, MI, in an historical home near one of the hills in the City of Allegan that create the valley where our downtown and many other residential areas are located. I am an elected Member of the Allegan City Council, and serve on the M-89 Corridor Committee, which deals with issues related to a portion of that State highway. My home is located in the residential area of the Corridor. I also am a Board Member of Citizens For A Safer Community, which was formed to look for solutions to the problems inherent in having three major State Highways, M-89, M-40 and M-222, bisect our community. These three State highways go through many of Allegan's residential and historical areas. For some time residents of Allegan living along the hills of Grand Street, Marshall Street and Western Avenue, have had to deal with the noise issue and negative effects that "Jake braking" has on our lives and the enjoyment of our property.

I met with our local State Representative Bob Genetski some time ago and asked for some assistance on this issue. I am very pleased to see this legislation moving forward to the Local Government Committee hearing. Unfortunately local commitments on Thursday prevent me from appearing in person, and therefore I request that these comments regarding this issue be entered into the official record.

Truck drivers that traverse up and down Allegan's Hills regularly make use of their compression brakes, regardless of the fact that they are totally unnecessary. A friend who is a retired long distance truck driver confirmed that these hills are simply not anywhere near the steepness that would require compression brakes. Not wanting to adversely use the term "cowboys" as a pejorative, nevertheless, it does seem an appropriate designation. However much we would like these drivers to use their common sense, and to be respectful of Allegan's residential areas and residents, this problem is real and undesirable.

The fact is that the City of Allegan currently has an ordinance prohibiting the use of compression brakes. The unfortunate part is that Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) will not allow us to enforce it upon the state highways within our City limits.

In a perfect world these truck drivers would recognize, and be respectful of the fact that, not only are they driving in quiet residential areas, but also that the "hills" they are driving down do not at all require the use of "Jake Brakes". Unfortunately we do not live in a perfect world, and therefore we seek assistance from our state government to help us find a way to effectively deal

with the situation. I believe the compression brake legislation your committee is reviewing, can and will help us make a difference.

Were we located in the mountains of Pennsylvania, California or Colorado, to name a few, I would understand the necessity of this braking procedure and myself, and my fellow residents of Allegan, would learn to live with it. We find it very difficult to live with a situation that is not based upon need, and seems only based on a desire to make noise!

I personally, and as a representative of Citizens For a Safer Community, as well as for the residents of the community which I serve, urge the House Committee on Local Government to hear our plea for legislation that would enable give us the opportunity to enjoy a more peaceful environment in the City of Allegan.

Thank you again for the opportunity to communicate these concerns.