MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
GRADUATE STUDENT COUNCIL

Statement on An act to reduce traffic fatalities

The Graduate Student Council (GSC) represents the 6,900 graduate students of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) in all matters concerning their quality of life during their studies at MIT. We support all measures that increase the availability, quality, and affordability of transportation services and infrastructure used by students. **Therefore, we strongly support the bill S. 1905 / H. 2877, An Act to reduce traffic fatalities, for its provisions to enhance the safety of alternate modes of transportation such as bicycling in Massachusetts.**

Frequent vehicle-bicycle interactions make our streets less safe to ride. In Cambridge alone, there were 165 reported crashes involving bicyclists in 2015,\(^1\) and across Massachusetts 12 cyclists were killed and almost 100 incapacitated in road crashes in 2015.\(^2\) Bicyclists are particularly at risk of serious injury or death from large trucks due to their size and large undercarriage in which bicycles can get trapped.\(^3\) Additionally, reducing distractions and vehicular speeds on dense roads can help prevent crashes of all modes of transportation.

S. 1545 / H. 2877 improves the safety of Massachusetts roads by mandating life-saving side-guards on large trucks, requiring Massachusetts drivers to operate mobile devices “hands-free” (in line with most of New England), establishing a state-wide reporting system for pedestrian and bicycle-involved crashes, and lowering default speed limits on dense state roads. **We feel these are important measures to enhance the safety of transportation for the MIT community and Commonwealth residents, and urge passage of S. 1905 / H. 2877.**

*Prepared by the External Affairs Board on behalf of the MIT Graduate Student Council. October 2017*

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