

**To: House Judiciary Committee**  
**From: Christopher Harris**  
**Subject: H.B. 239**  
**Date: January 18, 2006**

I am writing to express my strong support for H.B. 239, sponsored by Representative Phillips. This bill has a simple, straightforward purpose: to prevent injuries to Montana's schoolchildren caused by speeding drivers. H.B. 239 would elevate the fines for violating speed limits in school zones from double to triple the amount of the standard penalty. Equally important, the speed limit and these new tough penalties would be clearly spelled out in street signs near the school. The entire objective of this legislation is to deter violators and thereby keep our children a little safer. It has been my observation over the years that virtually all drivers know what the applicable speed limit is -- and frequently know the applicable penalty. Their violations usually involve a calculated risk: *"Can I get away with it and, if not, what's the worst the could happen?"* The unambiguous message of Rep. Phillips' bill is: *"Don't even think about speeding near our schools. But if you're caught it will cost you plenty."* This is precisely the kind of message the Legislature should be sending. I urge this Committee to favorably report on H.B. 239.