



House Bill 271

Vehicle Laws – Speed Monitoring Systems – Quarterly Audits

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment & Transportation Committee

Date: February 19, 2015

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 271. The bill would impose impractical audit requirements that would significantly impair the ability of local speed camera programs to function.

HB 271 would require a local jurisdiction that has a speed camera program to obtain quarterly audits of its speed camera program by a qualified independent person. The results of the audits must be kept on file and shall be admitted as evidence in any court proceeding regarding a potential speed camera violation.

The audit requirement would require a local government to take down its speed cameras and ship them off to a qualified laboratory to be tested. The cameras would then have to be shipped back and placed into operation. This process can easily take more than 4 weeks. The practical effect would be to keep speed cameras out of operation for significant amounts of time and as the bill's fiscal note indicates, impose significant costs on those local governments that operate speed camera programs.

Furthermore, this committee and the General Assembly has already considered and rejected the idea of quarterly audits (HB 1288 of 2014). Instead, SB 350 and HB 929 of 2014 instituted many reasonable speed camera reforms, including requiring local governments with speed camera programs to make publicly available annual reports to the Maryland Police Training Commission and to have all of their speed cameras undergo an annual calibration test by an independent laboratory. The bills were crafted over two years and passed with bipartisan support. They were also supported by MACo, the Maryland Municipal League, and AAA Mid-Atlantic (a vocal critic of certain local speed camera programs).

HB 271 would impose a requirement that would significantly reduce the ability of local governments to run and manage speed camera programs; a requirement that was previously considered and rejected by this committee and the General Assembly during the enactment of 2014 speed camera reform legislation. Accordingly, MACo recommends the Committee issue an **UNFAVORABLE** report for HB 271.