



House Bill 536

Vehicle Laws – Speed Monitoring, Work Zone Speed Control, and Traffic Control Signal Monitoring Systems - Repeal

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: February 23, 2017

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 536. The bill would repeal successful public safety programs that have been shown to reduce fatalities and vehicle crashes.

HB 536 would repeal red light camera programs, local speed camera programs, and State highway work zone speed camera programs.

Both red light camera and speed camera programs have been shown to be effective in altering driver behavior and increasing public safety. Various studies have shown that red light cameras reduce the number of serious and fatal “t-bone” vehicle crashes.

As for local speed camera programs, in August of 2015, WTOP news reported that speed camera tickets have dropped significantly in both Montgomery and Prince George’s Counties as drivers altered behavior and reduced their speeds in targeted zones:¹

In Prince George’s County, Maryland, speed camera tickets have dropped by one-third over the last two years. In fiscal 2013, police issued 360,548 speed camera tickets. In fiscal 2015, the number dropped to 240,730.

In Montgomery County, Maryland, speed camera tickets dropped 20 percent over the same two-year period. In fiscal 2013, police issued 451,972 speed camera tickets compared with 355,321 issued through the end of March 2015.

Wicomico County ended its speed camera program in December of 2015 because the program has been successful in reducing speeding in targeted school zones.

Finally, this Committee and the General Assembly passed legislation in 2014 (HB 929 and SB 350) that comprehensively updated the local speed camera statute. The update included both additional program safeguards and necessary clarifications. The bills passed with bi-partisan support and had the support of MACo, the Maryland Municipal League, and AAA-Mid Atlantic. There have been no significant reported issues with local speed camera programs since the passage of the legislation and a repeal of the programs is unnecessary and unwarranted.

HB 536 would unnecessarily repeal proven public safety programs that have adequate oversight and safeguards in place, particularly in light of recent action by the General Assembly. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to adopt an **UNFAVORABLE** report on HB 536.

¹ <http://wtop.com/sprawl-crawl/2015/08/speed-camera-tickets-down-in-maryland/>