



House Bill 776

Vehicle Laws – Speed Monitoring Systems – Operation in School Zones

MACo Position: **OPPOSE**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: February 28, 2019

From: Leslie Knapp, Jr.

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **OPPOSES** HB 776. The bill would impose unreasonable, costly, and unnecessary requirements on school zone speed camera programs.

HB 776 provides that for each school zone speed camera activated, placed, repaired, or altered on or after June 1, 2019, there must be a device that displays real-time posting of the speed at which a vehicle is traveling in each direction of a roadway and in close proximity to the boundary of the school zones. The bill also prohibits a contractor's fee from exceeding 30% of the gross revenue generated by the speed camera system.

The bill's provisions are unnecessary and have been previously rejected by this Committee last year (see HB 1365 of 2018). More broadly, during the 2013 and 2014 Sessions, this Committee formed a stakeholders' workgroup to take a comprehensive look at the administration of local government speed camera programs. The work of the Committee ultimately led to the passage of an omnibus bill (HB 929 and SB 350 of 2014). MACo supported the bi-partisan legislation, which included new program safeguards and needed clarifications. There have been no reported systemic issues with local speed camera programs since the passage of the legislation.

The real-time speed posting requirement is costly and unnecessary. Current law already requires specific signage that is compliant with State Highway Administration standards. Drivers are provided with reasonable notice to check their speed. Furthermore, many real-time speed posting devices are not as accurate as speed cameras and may instill a false sense of reliability in drivers.

The issue of contractor compensation was also discussed extensively during the 2013 and 2014 Sessions and ultimately the General Assembly rejected specific contractor reimbursement limits in lieu of other program safeguards.

HB 776 is unnecessary and would significantly undermine local school zone speed camera programs. Accordingly, MACo requests the Committee give HB 776 an **UNFAVORABLE** report.