



# Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

## Maryland Sheriffs' Association



### MEMORANDUM

**TO:** The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chair and  
Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

**DATE:** March 23, 2023

**RE:** **SB 11 – Motor Vehicles - Establishment of School Zones**

**POSITION:** **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **OPPOSE SB 11**. This bill would limit the placement of a speed camera in a school zone not exceeding 500 feet approaching or beyond the school building or school grounds unless recommended by a traffic engineering study.

Many schools across the state are served by large, populated areas, such as apartments or high-density neighborhoods, where children walk, bike, or otherwise travel to or from every day, that are well beyond 500 feet approaching or beyond the school or school grounds. These students travel through several neighborhoods and cross several streets to get to school. For example, in Prince George's County, middle school students may walk up to 2 miles from their homes to/from school, and elementary school students up to one and 1/2 miles to/from school (see the attached PGCPs Administrative Procedures) before requiring bus transportation. We are all aware of the shortages of school buses and drivers. We now have more students walking from all directions to our schools. Narrowing school boundaries narrows the protection of children from speeding drivers.

The requirement for a traffic engineering study is expensive, and cumbersome, potentially adding months if not years to the process of assessing dangerous conditions for our children. We need the ability to move or change the camera's location quickly when conditions change or if unfortunately, an accident with a child occurs. For reference on accidents, see the attached fatality charts. It should be noted that Prince George's County, the second biggest school system in the state, has nearly double the number of fatalities of the next deadliest jurisdiction, Baltimore County.

Furthermore, the requirement that a school is "Accredited" is unnecessary given the current law's requirement for K-12 schools. Finally, the bill states that "School Grounds" be defined as "Property that students routinely occupy within a school zone." This clause could very well limit the camera's operation only for school hours. The current law specifies Monday through Friday, 6:00 AM to 8:00 PM for camera operation.

The bottom line is, Maryland has an excellent Speed Camera Law. It is well-tested and works in our communities. The \$40.00 is fair and not overly burdensome balanced against protecting our children. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **OPPOSE SB 11** and request an **UNFAVORABLE** Committee report.

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