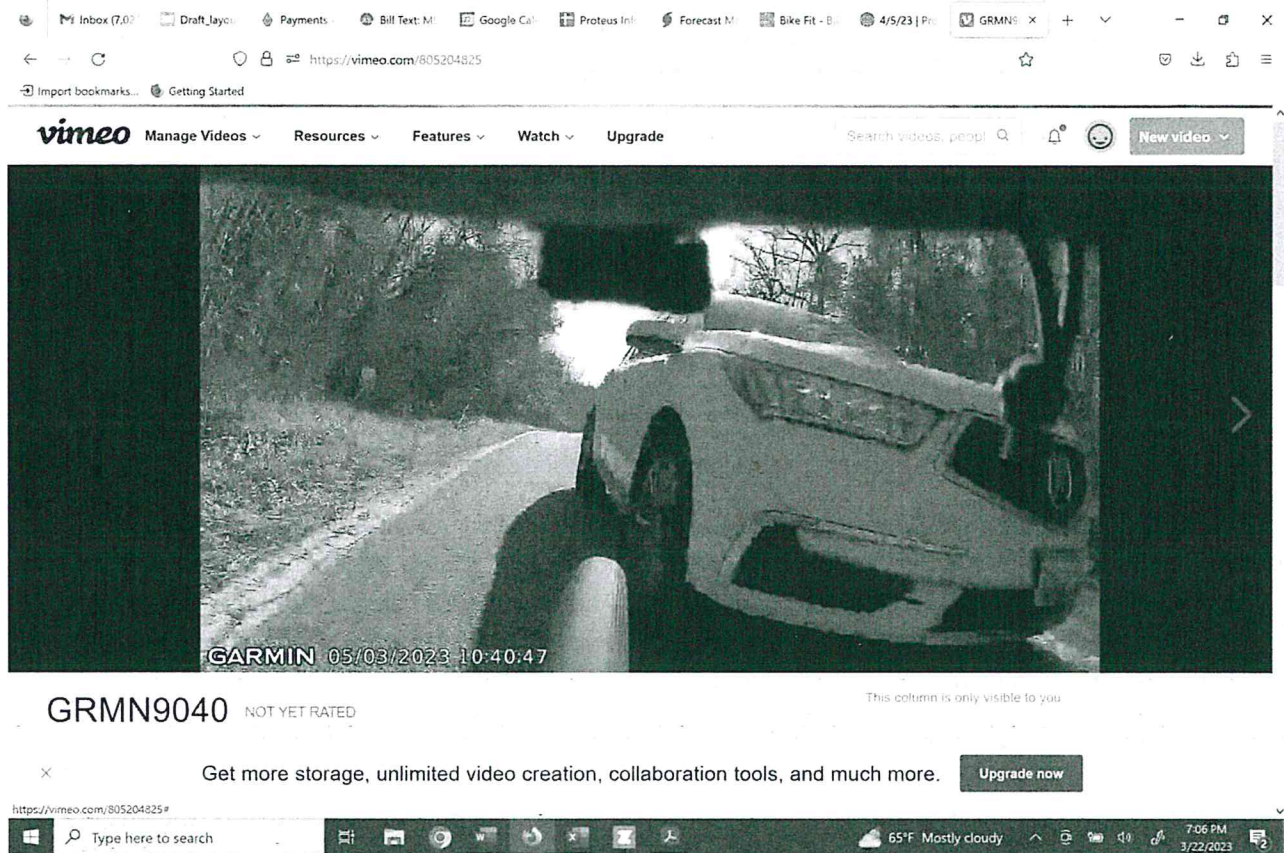


<https://vimeo.com/805204825>– 15 seconds



The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying a Vimeo video. The video player shows a car on a road, with a timestamp of 05/03/2023 10:40:47. The video title is GRMN9040, and it is marked as 'NOT YET RATED'. A banner for 'Upgrade now' is visible below the video player. The browser's address bar shows the URL <https://vimeo.com/805204825>. The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom, showing the search bar, taskbar icons, and system tray with the date 3/22/2023 and time 7:06 PM.

My name is Jeff Lemieux, and I'm testifying for myself, although I'm part of a loosely knit collection of bike riding advocates called the Action Committee for Prince George's County that is concerned with this bill.

This picture was from my wife's rear-facing bike camera, on March 5 this year. If you have your phone or laptop handy, you can see the real-time video is at <https://vimeo.com/805204825> – it's only 15 seconds long. The speed limit on that road is 30mph, but it's unenforced, obviously.

Bike riders in Maryland are threatened by aggressive, speeding drivers like this every day. Why? Because there's not much speed enforcement and the drivers know it.

By contrast, in my neighborhood, in Greenbelt on Crescent Road and Cherrywood Lane, where IS school zone camera enforcement, bike riding is usually safe, even though our bike lanes aren't really that great. Before the cameras, Cherrywood Lane was a drag strip.

Police have pulled back from routine traffic stops in our region, and the bike community in the DC/Maryland region supports that. Bike riders in this area tend to oppose depending on police traffic stops, because they have proven to be too discriminatory, with too much racial profiling and with traffic stops too often ending with police violence.

But we still need speed enforcement. 121 people died on the roads of my county last year, according to the Washington Post. Speeding has gotten much worse since the pandemic.

Our county also does not have school buses for kids within 1.5 miles of school for elementary and 2 miles for middle and high schoolers. Maybe in richer areas, all the kids are driven to school, but a lot of our kids bike or walk that mile. They deserve more protection, not less.

Finally, I get that the state vs. local jurisdiction issue can be fraught, but I believe it's wrong in this case for Maryland to put even tighter restrictions on local jurisdictions' ability to manage their public safety – this trend seems to be getting worse nationally, and Maryland shouldn't join in. Other states are putting in rules to prohibit local school districts from requiring masks in a pandemic. Many states restrict cities' ability to enact tougher gun laws to protect their residents. Maryland should be putting LESS restrictions on local government's ability to protect their residents, not MORE.

I get that drivers get annoyed by speed tickets – but it's really easy to avoid tickets from speed cameras – don't speed. If you don't like how a locality enforces its speed limits, don't drive there!

Besides, it's incredibly disrespectful to say you want to speed through somebody else's community and break their speed limit law with impunity. Who is so important that a few seconds of their time is more important than the safety of the people living on the street or trying to get around their neighborhood? Even if you don't like the placement of a particular camera, it's still a law to stay under the speed limit, and the cameras don't even send tickets unless you're driving 12 mph above the law!

Speeding drivers already have the upper hand in Maryland. Our state roads in Greenbelt are already built like highways, with overpasses and high-speed ramps and guard rails and overhead signs. It's incredibly expensive to build, and yet these high-speed roads have hurt our community – they have cut our City into pieces. It has hurt our economic potential and our community cohesion. We need to calm our roads, make them safer for walkers and bike riders, and start rebuilding our economic potential. Putting further restrictions on speed enforcement is going the wrong direction.

I watched the Senate committee debate on this bill – it was chaotic and confusing. At the very least this bill, however amended, is clearly not ready for enactment. It's a mess, and its implications are very uncertain, potentially expensive, and likely deadly. I urge you to reject SB 11 and focus the committee's time on traffic calming and safety, not on encouraging more speeding in school zones or anywhere else in our state!

Jeff Lemieux
92 Ridge Road, Greenbelt 20770
jlemieux256@gmail.com

301 852 9795 cell