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Judicial Proceedings Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

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Administrative, Executive, and
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Children, Youth, and Families

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Baltimore County Senate Delegation

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony for SB 11
Motor Vehicles – Speed Limits – School Zones
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee
On January 25, 2023**

Good afternoon Chairman Smith, members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am here before you today to present Senate Bill 11, which addresses a vitally important topic concerning the safety of our school children and those who aid their commute to and from their respective schools. With school zone crossing guards and speed limit signs already working to control the safety and protection of children of all ages on their walk into school, the addition of speed cameras was supposed to be a measure adding another level of security and well-being to the minds of parents and school administration. However, under current statutory law school zones currently allow school zone speed camera up to 0.5 miles away from the school. Senate Bill 11, as amended, is meant to bring uniformity to camera placement in the least disruptive manner.

In a story that made national news in February 2022, a Maryland crossing guard was hit by a speeding car when she pushed a middle school student out of harm's way.¹ The incident was caught on camera by a nearby school bus. Another crossing guard was hit and hospitalized in critical condition in October 2022,² with no camera footage available as the nearest camera was 0.3 miles away, housed at a busy community intersection.³

Currently, the law allows a jurisdiction the power of placement anywhere within a 0.5-mile radius of schools, which can be up to 10 blocks away. In some instances, cameras aren't in an area to directly benefit school children's safety but are placed in high traffic areas where speeding is likely. Maryland State Highway Administration policy states that "except in unusual circumstances and

¹ 'Hero': Maryland crossing guard hit while protecting student from car. KIRO-7, February 6, 2022.

² Elementary school crossing guard critically injured after being hit by car in Northeast Baltimore. WMAR-2, October 26, 2022.

³ Baltimore City Speed Cameras – Google My Maps. N.d.

as justified by a traffic engineering study, a school zone adjacent to a school should not exceed 500 feet approaching or beyond the school or the school activity.” Senate Bill 11, as amended, will adopt current Maryland State Highway Administration policy to ensure the placement of cameras in closer proximity to schools to ensure our children and crossing guards benefit from these camera’s usage within school zones. Children should feel safe getting to school, and not have to worry about themselves or the adults who serve to protect them in ensuring their safe passage to the building.

Senate Bill 11 will ensure that the safety and protection of our children in the commute to the area they spend most of their day, our schools, is uniformly furthered. For these reasons, I ask you to vote favorably in support SB 11.