



## Montgomery County's Advocates for Better Transportation

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February 13, 2024

SUPPORT for Montgomery County - School Bus Monitoring Cameras - Distribution of Fines  
MC 6-24 (HB 0761)

Action Committee for Transit, a Montgomery County–based organization, supports improvements to pedestrian safety, especially for our most vulnerable road users, including persons with disabilities, the elderly, and children. Making roads safer for our most vulnerable users makes them safer for everyone.

In 2016, Montgomery County began a school bus monitoring camera program<sup>1</sup> to respond to the increasing roadway dangers faced by children traveling to school. The program, which has equipped all 1,600+ Montgomery County Public School (MCPS) buses with cameras, issues citations and fines to drivers that could injure or kill schoolchildren in the zone surrounding a stopped school bus.<sup>2</sup> In FY 2022, 59,151 citations were issued, resulting in \$14,787,750 in fines.<sup>3</sup>

Current law permits Montgomery County to use the fines collected from the program, after administrative costs, to make safety improvements.<sup>4</sup> While school bus cameras are proving successful in reducing violations on county roads, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) determined that specific locations on state roads maintained by the State Highway Administration (SHA) make up the largest and most persistent sources of

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<sup>1</sup> Cameras record vehicles that pass stopped school buses that have activated red flashing lights and stop sign/arm extended. Following a review process, confirmed violators are issued a \$250 fine by mail within 14 days of the event. [Montgomery County FY2022 School Bus Monitoring System and Stop Safety Review](#), Dec. 30, 2022.

<sup>2</sup> When approaching a stopped school bus with activated flashing red lights, Maryland law requires that motorists traveling in the same direction as the bus must stop and remain stopped until the stop sign and lights are deactivated. The law also requires that motorists approaching the bus from the opposite direction must stop if there is no physical barrier, such as a grass or raised concrete median. Maryland Code, Transportation § 21-706.

<sup>3</sup> [Montgomery County FY2022 School Bus Monitoring System and Stop Safety Review](#), pp. 8-10.

<sup>4</sup> Maryland Code, Courts and Judicial Proceedings § 7-302(e)(4).

violations. However, MCDOT does not control state roads and cannot address these areas of highest safety risk to its schoolchildren.

*Montgomery County - School Bus Monitoring Cameras - Distribution of Fines MC 6-24* would correct this omission by requiring the fines collected by Montgomery County school bus monitoring cameras on SHA-administered state roads be used only for pedestrian safety improvements where the violations occur. SHA-administered roads include most of Montgomery County's multi-lane arterials, which are designed to prioritize vehicle throughput and typically feature only the barest protections for pedestrians. Education and enforcement have minimal impact on driver behavior on arterial roads.<sup>5</sup> Instead, these roads require context-specific modifications such as curb realignments, median installations, and adding traffic signals to reduce dangerous behavior.<sup>6</sup>

Montgomery County state roads are among the most dangerous in the state.<sup>7</sup> Children traveling to and from school buses on state roads are only a few feet from serious injury or death. We now have the data and funding to improve safety at the most dangerous school bus stops in Montgomery County, the next step is for funding to be allocated to SHA.

We strongly urge you to vote yes on *Montgomery County - School Bus Monitoring Cameras - Distribution of Fines MC 6-24* (HB 0761) to ensure these critical safety improvements are made.

Sincerely,  
Anna Priddy  
On behalf of the Action Committee for Transit

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<sup>5</sup> Steve Davis, "How street design shapes the epidemic of preventable pedestrian fatalities," Smart Growth America (Jul. 12, 2022), <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/how-street-design-shapes-the-epidemic-of-preventable-pedestrian-fatalities/>.

<sup>6</sup> See generally Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) [SHA Context Driven Initiative](#) (2020). While the initiative does not specifically discuss school bus stops, it generally highlights "safety, land use, environmental issues, culture, and community livability as critical factors in the planning, design, construction, and operation of transportation infrastructure."

<sup>7</sup> In 2023, Montgomery County had the third-highest number of roadway fatalities in Maryland (only Prince George's and Baltimore Counties had higher roadway fatalities). During this time, 43 people died, 15 of them pedestrians. State roads had more than twice the number of fatalities than county roads. <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/crashdashboard/>.