Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly
2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 319 (Prince George's County Delegation)
Environment and Transportation

Prince George's County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Intersection of Suitland Road and Skyline Drive
PG 310-20

This bill authorizes the placement and use of two speed monitoring systems (speed cameras) at the southern intersection of Suitland Road and Skyline Drive in Prince George's County, subject to existing signage and placement requirements for speed cameras.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund revenues may increase minimally beginning in FY 2021 due to additional contested cases in District Court. Expenditures are not materially affected.

Local Effect: Local revenues increase beginning in FY 2021 to the extent the speed camera is placed as authorized, as discussed below. Expenditures increase for installation and maintenance, with the remaining amounts reserved for public safety purposes.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law: Speed monitoring systems must be authorized in a local jurisdiction by the governing body of the jurisdiction (but only after reasonable notice and a public hearing). Before activating a speed monitoring system, a local jurisdiction must publish notice of the location of the speed monitoring system on its website and in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. In addition, the jurisdiction must also ensure that each sign that designates a school zone is proximate to a sign that (1) indicates that speed monitoring

systems are in use in the school zone and (2) conforms with specified traffic control device standards adopted by the State Highway Administration.

From the fines generated by a speed monitoring system, the relevant jurisdiction may recover the costs of implementing the system and may spend any remaining balance solely for public safety purposes, including for pedestrian safety programs. However, if the balance of revenues after cost recovery for any fiscal year is greater than 10% of the jurisdiction's total revenues, the excess must be remitted to the Comptroller.

Background: A complete discussion of automated enforcement systems in the State can be found in the **Appendix – Automated Enforcement.**

State Fiscal Effect: Under the bill, the number of citations issued in Prince George's County is expected to increase. As a result, the number of individuals opting for a trial in District Court is also likely to increase. Accordingly, general fund revenues may increase minimally, as fine revenues paid by individuals convicted in District Court are paid into the general fund. The increase in District Court caseloads can likely be handled with existing resources.

Local Fiscal Effect: Local revenues increase beginning in fiscal 2021 to the extent that Prince George's County chooses to place the speed cameras as authorized by the bill.

If the authorization is used, expenditures also increase beginning in fiscal 2021 to procure, install, and maintain the additional cameras. Based on historical data and the use of speed camera systems in the State to date, the increase in revenues is likely to exceed the increase in expenditures. After cost recovery, the remaining revenues may only be expended for public safety purposes. Thus, expenditures also increase for public safety purposes.

Although the exact increase in revenues cannot be projected because the number of citations that might be issued in the area affected by the bill is unknown, *for illustrative purposes only*, local revenues increase by $427,050 in fiscal 2021 (reflecting the bill's October 1, 2020 effective date) and by $569,400 in subsequent years under the following assumptions:

- each speed camera captures 30 violations per day;
- 65% of violators prepay the fine (at $40); and
- 35% of violators contest the citation in District Court.

According to data from the Comptroller's Office, revenues generated from speed camera fines in Prince George's County have generally decreased as compliance has increased. As shown in **Exhibit 1**, in fiscal 2019, the county generated about $6.1 million in total fine revenues, compared to $13.1 million in fiscal 2013. (These amounts are exclusive of local

municipalities within Prince George's County that operate their own speed monitoring systems.) In each year, the county has recovered its costs of implementation and had additional monies available to spend on public safety.

Exhibit 1
Revenues from Speed Monitoring Systems in Prince George's County
Fiscal 2013-2019

	Fine Revenues	Implementation Costs	Net Revenues
Fiscal 2013	$13,112,169	$5,348,612	$7,763,557
Fiscal 2014	10,254,966	4,681,911	5,573,055
Fiscal 2015	8,515,818	3,915,888	4,599,930
Fiscal 2016	8,759,276	4,274,963	4,484,313
Fiscal 2017	7,173,439	4,054,274	3,119,165
Fiscal 2018	6,894,036	4,132,890	2,761,147
Fiscal 2019	6,050,877	4,108,480	1,942,398

Source: Comptroller's Office

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Prince George's County; Comptroller's Office; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 6, 2020
an/ljm

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Appendix – Automated Enforcement

Speed Monitoring Systems

Chapter 15 of 2006 authorized the first use of speed monitoring systems in the State, but it only applied to highways in school zones and residential districts in Montgomery County. Since that time, the General Assembly has expanded the authorization several times.

- Chapter 500 of 2009 expanded statewide the authorization for the use of speed monitoring systems in school zones and also authorized the use of work zone speed control systems.

- Chapter 474 of 2010 authorized the use of speed monitoring systems in Prince George's County on a highway located within the grounds of an institution of higher education or on nearby highways under certain circumstances.

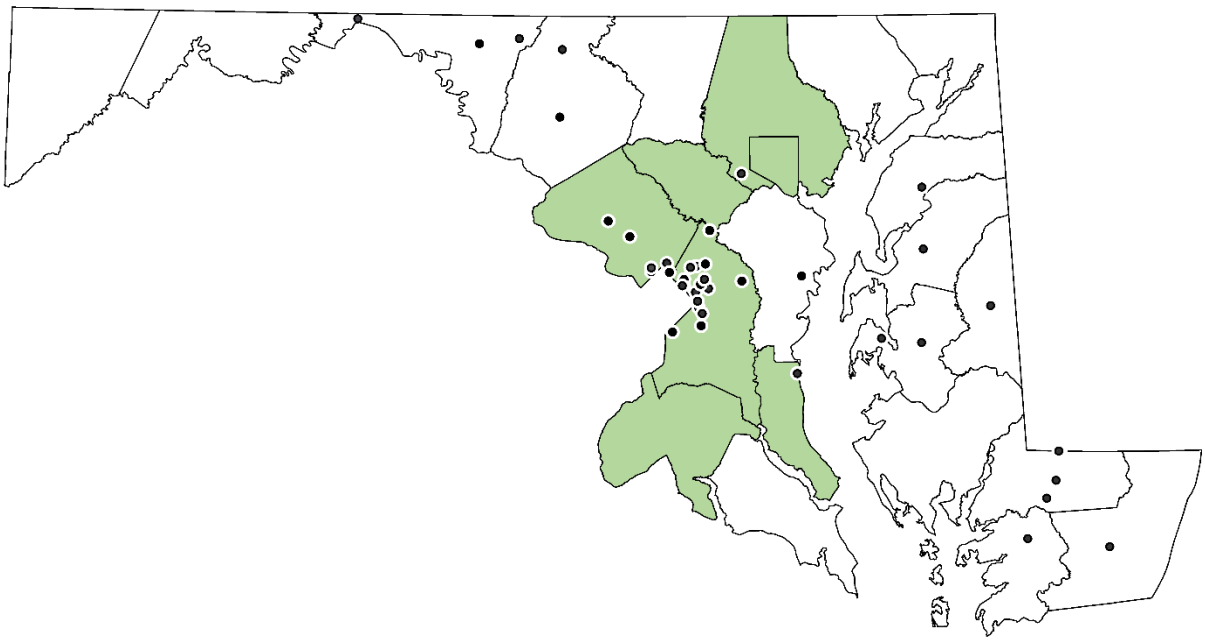
- Chapter 806 of 2018 authorized Prince George's County to place one speed camera at the intersection of Old Fort Road and Maryland Route 210 (Indian Head Highway), subject to specified requirements. Chapter 586 of 2019 repealed the limitation on the location of speed cameras that may be placed on Indian Head Highway and increased (to three) the number of speed cameras that the county (and local jurisdictions within the county) may use on the highway (presumably only until the existing authorization terminates September 30, 2023).

Unless the driver of a motor vehicle received a citation from a police officer at the time of the violation, the owner or driver of the vehicle is subject to a civil penalty if the vehicle is recorded speeding at least 12 miles per hour above the posted speed limit by a speed monitoring system in violation of specified speed restrictions in the Maryland Vehicle Law. The maximum fine for a citation issued by a speed monitoring system operator is $40. However, a local law enforcement or other designated agency operating the speed monitoring system may mail a warning notice instead of a citation.

A speed monitoring system may be placed in a school zone for operation between 6:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. Before a speed monitoring system may be used in a local jurisdiction, its use must be authorized by the governing body by ordinance or resolution adopted after reasonable notice and a public hearing, and its location must be published on the jurisdiction's website and in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction.

According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), approximately 150 jurisdictions across the nation use speed cameras. In Maryland, speed cameras are used in six counties and Baltimore City, 40 other jurisdictions, and by the State Highway Administration (SHA) on a statewide basis for work zones. **Exhibit 1** shows local speed camera usage across the State as of January 2020.

Exhibit 1
Local Speed Monitoring System Enforcement in Maryland
January 2020



Note: ● represents municipal corporations that operate speed monitoring systems; ▭ represents counties that operate speed monitoring systems. Speed cameras are also operated in highway work zones statewide.

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; Comptroller's Office; Department of Legislative Services

From the fines generated by a speed monitoring system, the relevant jurisdiction may recover the costs of implementing the system and may spend any remaining balance solely for public safety purposes, including for pedestrian safety programs. However, if the balance of revenues after cost recovery for any fiscal year is greater than 10% of the jurisdiction's total revenues, the excess must be remitted to the Comptroller. As shown in **Exhibit 2**, according to data from the Comptroller, as of January 2020, approximately

$204,100 was remitted in fiscal 2019 (with data pending for the City of Seat Pleasant only), while $226,800 was remitted in fiscal 2018.

Exhibit 2
Local Speed Monitoring Systems Data (Aggregated)
Fiscal 2014-2019

Fiscal Year	Fine Revenues	System Costs	Net Revenues	Due to State
2019*	$60,258,673	$32,846,505	$27,412,488	$204,144
2018	63,749,052	31,395,278	32,376,854	226,822
2017	54,802,197	30,145,731	24,757,588	-
2016	57,198,345	31,637,019	25,208,963	-
2015	56,966,652	28,794,043	28,175,109	456,006
2014	53,842,875	32,978,310	20,864,564	-

* As of January 2020; data pending for City of Seat Pleasant.

Source: Comptroller's Office; Department of Legislative Services

Also, in fiscal 2019, the Comptroller reports that 47 (excluding the City of Seat Pleasant) local jurisdictions generated speed monitoring system fine revenues of about $60.3 million, of which about $27.4 million (45.5%) was retained by local jurisdictions for public safety programs after recovery of the costs of implementing the systems. Between fiscal 2018 and 2019, total fine revenues decreased by approximately $3.5 million while implementation expenditures increased by about $1.5 million. Net revenues retained by local jurisdictions for public safety decreased by approximately $5.0 million between fiscal 2018 and 2019.

Speed Monitoring System Reform – Chapter 491 of 2014

The General Assembly passed House Bill 929 of 2014 (enacted as Chapter 491) in response to significant concerns from the public and media scrutiny of speed cameras in Baltimore City and several other jurisdictions. These concerns centered around two common criticisms of speed cameras: (1) that technical issues and insufficient review of recorded images resulted in erroneously generated citations; and (2) that the contracts with vendors were structured in such a manner as to establish an incentive to generate more citations and revenues, thereby casting doubt on the integrity or purpose of speed monitoring programs. Thus, Chapter 491 required jurisdictions to impose new restrictions and requirements on their contracts with speed monitoring vendors and established numerous additional requirements and restrictions pertaining to the issuance of citations, the calibration and self-testing of systems, the review of erroneous citations, and the use and placement of systems in school zones.

Automated Speed Enforcement Efficacy

National and international studies of automated speed enforcement, as well as local program evaluations, provide some insight into the level of effectiveness of such enforcement mechanisms. According to IIHS, several studies have documented reductions in crashes in the vicinities of speed cameras, including crashes that result in an injury or fatality.

A 2015 study by IIHS of speed camera usage in Montgomery County, Maryland, showed long-term changes in driver behavior as well as reductions in injuries and deaths. Montgomery County introduced speed cameras in 2007, and an initial review of the program by IIHS six months into the program found that the percentage of vehicles going more than 10 miles per hour over the speed limit (which, at that time, was the enforcement threshold) declined by 70% on roads with speed cameras. The 2015 study showed a 59% reduction in the likelihood of a driver exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 miles per hour, compared with similar roads in Virginia without speed cameras. The same comparison showed a 19% reduction in the likelihood that a crash would involve a fatality or an incapacitating injury.

Data from the National Work Zone Safety Information Clearinghouse shows that there were 754 fatalities in highway work zones nationwide in 2018, including 10 in Maryland. The number of work zone fatalities in Maryland in 2018 decreased by four compared to 2017. Nationally, the number of work zone fatalities decreased by about 55 compared to 2017.

Traffic Control Signal Monitoring Systems (Red Light Cameras)

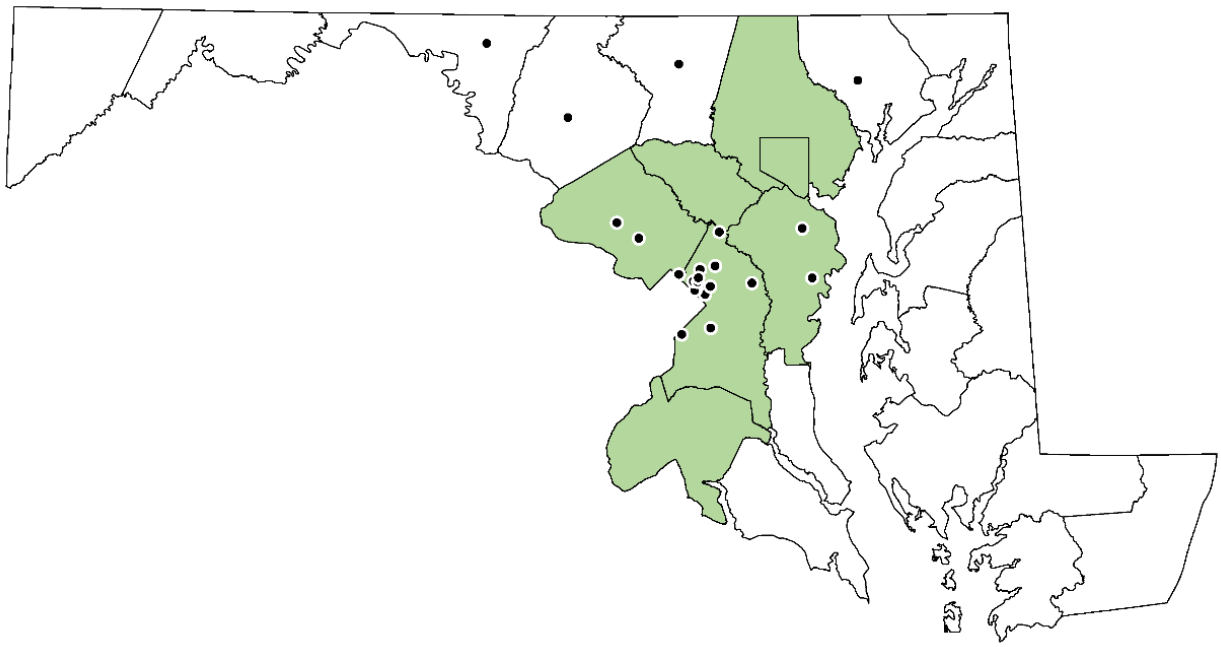
Unless the driver of a motor vehicle receives a citation from a police officer at the time of the violation, the owner or driver of a vehicle recorded by a red light monitoring system entering an intersection against a red signal in violation of the Maryland Vehicle Law is subject to a civil penalty of up to $100. Red light camera enforcement applies to a violation of specified Maryland Vehicle Law requirements applicable to a vehicle approaching a steady circular red signal or arrow, including (1) stopping at a clearly marked stop line, or crosswalk if there is no stop line, or intersection if there is no crosswalk and (2) remaining stopped until a signal allows the vehicle to proceed.

A driver is specifically authorized under the Maryland Vehicle Law to cautiously enter an intersection to make a right turn (or left turn from a one-way street to another one-way street) after stopping at a steady red light, unless a sign otherwise prohibits the turn.

According to IIHS, approximately 340 jurisdictions across the nation have red light camera programs as of January 2020. In Maryland, six counties, Baltimore City, and 22 other

jurisdictions use red light cameras. **Exhibit 3** shows red light camera usage across the State as of January 2020.

Exhibit 3
Local Red Light Camera Enforcement in Maryland
January 2020



Note: ● represents municipal corporations that operate red light camera systems; ▭ represents counties that operate red light camera systems.

Source: Insurance Institute for Highway Safety; Department of Legislative Services