

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2021 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 971

(Delegate Mautz)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

Talbot County Speed Monitoring Systems

This bill authorizes the placement of one speed monitoring system (speed camera) at the intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue (in Talbot County), subject to existing signage and placement requirements for speed cameras. The bill also requires a real-time display of a driver's traveling speed. From the fines collected as a result of violations enforced by the speed camera, any balance remaining after cost recovery must be remitted to the Comptroller for distribution to the State Highway Administration (SHA) to then be used solely to assist in making roadway and pedestrian safety improvements in the area. **The bill terminates September 30, 2026.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues increase beginning as early as FY 2022 until the authorization ends in FY 2027, as discussed below. TTF expenditures increase correspondingly for roadway and pedestrian safety improvements in the area affected by the bill. General fund revenues may increase negligibly over the same period due to additional contested cases in District Court.

Local Effect: Local revenues increase beginning as early as FY 2022 until the authorization ends in FY 2027 to the extent the speed camera is placed as authorized, as discussed below. Expenditures increase for installation and maintenance; those costs may be covered by the revenues collected, but any remaining revenues must be remitted for distribution to SHA.

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 SHA. Similar requirements apply to speed cameras established on Maryland Route 210 (Indian Head Highway) as well as institutions of higher education in Prince George's County. On Maryland Route 210, each sign indicating the use of a speed camera must be near a device that displays a real-time posting of the driver's speed.

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.

State/Local Fiscal Effect: Under the bill, the number of citations issued in Talbot 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 negligibly, as fine revenues paid by individuals convicted in District Court are paid into the general fund. The increase in District Court caseloads can be handled with existing resources.

Local revenues increase, beginning as early as fiscal 2022 until the authorization ends after the first quarter of fiscal 2027, to the extent that the speed camera is placed as authorized. This analysis assumes that the speed camera is placed by the Town of Oxford (rather than Talbot County).

If the authorization is used, expenditures also increase over the same time period to procure, install, and maintain the camera. In addition, expenditures increase to procure and place signage displaying a driver's real-time traveling speed. The cost of one such sign may total several thousand dollars.

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.

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 \$71,175 in fiscal 2022 (reflecting the bill's

October 1, 2021 effective date) and by \$94,900 annually through fiscal 2026 under the following assumptions:

- the speed camera captures an average of 10 violations per day;
- 65% of violators prepay the fine (at \$40); and
- 35% of violators contest the citation in District Court.

In fiscal 2027, revenues are lower due to the authorization for the speed camera ending after the first quarter of the fiscal year. To the extent the speed camera captures significantly more violations each day, revenues increase accordingly.

After cost recovery, the bill requires any remaining balance to be distributed to SHA for specified roadway and pedestrian safety improvements in the area. Therefore, under the assumptions above, TTF revenues and expenditures increase (likely by less than \$100,000 beginning as early as fiscal 2022 and ending in fiscal 2027). Expenditures increase correspondingly for the improvements required by the bill. SHA can otherwise implement these requirements with existing resources.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: HB 1132 of 2020, a similar bill, received a hearing in the House Environment and Transportation Committee, but no further action was taken.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Comptroller's Office; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 10, 2021
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