

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 644

(Delegate Guyton, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

Vehicle Laws - Speed Monitoring Systems - Residential Districts

This bill expands the authorization to install and utilize speed monitoring systems (*i.e.*, speed cameras) on highways in residential districts with a maximum posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour to all local jurisdictions (instead of only Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties). Any expanded use of speed cameras under the bill is subject to existing requirements related to the enactment of local legislation.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund revenues from contested cases in the District Court may increase minimally as early as FY 2026 to the extent that additional speed cameras are installed, as discussed below. Any additional caseload for the District Court can be handled using existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: No effect on Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George’s counties. For other local jurisdictions, expenditures and revenues increase, potentially significantly, to the extent that any speed cameras are installed pursuant to the bill’s expanded authority.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Current Law:

Speed Monitoring Systems – Generally

State law authorizes the use of various automated monitoring systems, including traffic control system monitoring systems, speed monitoring systems, school bus monitoring systems, vehicle height monitoring systems, and work zone speed control systems.

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. Similar requirements apply to speed cameras established on Maryland Route 210 (Indian Head Highway), grounds of institutions of higher education in Prince George's County, Interstate 83 in Baltimore City, Maryland Route 175 in Anne Arundel County (Jessup Road) between the Maryland Route 175/295 interchange and the Anne Arundel County-Howard County line, and at the intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue in Talbot County.

In Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties only, speed monitoring systems may be used on a highway in a residential district with a maximum posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. The aforementioned signage requirements do not apply to these speed cameras.

Speed Monitoring Systems – Citations and Fines

Unless the driver of the motor vehicle received a citation from a police officer at the time of the violation, the owner or the driver of a motor vehicle is subject to a civil penalty if the motor vehicle is recorded by a speed monitoring system while exceeding the posted speed limit. The authorized agency (*e.g.*, a local law enforcement agency) must mail a citation to the owner that includes specified information, including a copy of the recorded image, the location where the violation occurred, and the amount of the civil penalty imposed and the date by which the civil penalty should be paid. A person who receives a citation may:

- pay the civil penalty, in accordance with the instructions on the citation, directly to the political subdivision; or
- elect to stand trial in the District Court for the alleged violation.

The civil penalty may not exceed \$40, and the District Court must prescribe:

- a uniform citation form that includes specified information and allows the person receiving the citation to pay the citation or contest the citation by standing trial, as specified; and
- a civil penalty, which must be indicated on the citation, to be paid by persons who choose to prepay the civil penalty without appearing in District Court.

With specified exceptions, penalty revenues from automated enforcement systems, including speed monitoring systems, must be paid (1) to the relevant political subdivision, in an uncontested case and (2) directly to the District Court (and consequently the general fund) in a case that is contested in District Court.

Generally, 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.

State Fiscal Effect: Assuming that speed cameras are installed in additional residential districts throughout the State, pursuant to the bill's expanded authority, the total number of speed camera citations issued is expected to increase beginning as early as fiscal 2026. As a result of this expected increase in citations, the number of individuals opting for a trial in District Court is also likely to increase.

Accordingly, general fund revenues increase, likely minimally, as fine revenues paid by individuals convicted in District Court are paid into the general fund. It is anticipated that the Judiciary can handle any increased case volume using existing budgeted resources. For context, the Judiciary advises that there were 6,066 requests for trial based on citations issued from speed monitoring systems.

Local Fiscal Effect: Speed cameras are authorized to be installed on certain highways within residential districts in Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties under current law; accordingly, the bill does not affect these counties or municipalities within these counties.

For all other local jurisdictions, the bill authorizes the installation of speed cameras on highways in residential districts with a maximum speed limit of 35 miles per hour if the local jurisdiction authorizes the cameras by ordinance or resolution adopted by its governing body and other specified requirements are met. To the extent that any local jurisdiction chooses to implement a speed camera program pursuant to the bill's expanded authority:

- expenditures increase to install the speed cameras and for other administrative expenses that may be incurred for the operation of the speed camera program (*e.g.*, mailing or contractual costs);
- revenues increase as citations are issued and penalty revenues are paid to the local jurisdiction; and

- expenditures further increase as the penalty revenues are used for authorized purposes.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 1444 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: SB 530 (Senator Brooks, *et al.*) - Judicial Proceedings.

Information Source(s): Comptroller's Office; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Association of Counties; Baltimore City; Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties; Maryland Municipal League; Department of Legislative Services

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