

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

Senate Bill 808

(Senator Augustine)

Judicial Proceedings

Environment and Transportation

Prince George's County - Stop Sign Monitoring Systems - School Bus Stops

This bill modifies the provisions of Chapter 678 of 2024 that authorize the use of stop sign monitoring systems on State and local highways located in a *school zone* in Prince George's County to also authorize the use of stop sign monitoring systems within 100 feet of a *school bus stop* on State or local highways in the county, if authorized by the State Highway Administration (SHA) or the governing body of the local jurisdiction, respectively. The bill also (1) authorizes administrative cost recovery for stop sign monitoring systems; (2) modifies a requirement related to the posting of signage to indicate when stop sign monitoring systems are in use on State highways; and (3) limits the time frame during which stop sign monitoring systems may be operational to only Monday through Friday between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m. Otherwise, existing requirements and penalties that apply for stop sign monitoring systems authorized by Chapter 678 also apply to any new systems placed under the bill's authority. As Chapter 678 terminates June 30, 2029, the bill's authority also terminates June 30, 2029.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Because the bill is authorizing in nature and Prince George's County has not implemented any stop sign monitoring systems under current law, the impact on State finances generally depends on the extent to which any systems are deployed in Prince George's County, as discussed below. Nevertheless, the District Court must be prepared should any systems be deployed under the bill, with programming costs totaling \$10,900 in FY 2026 only.

Local Effect: The bill is authorizing in nature, and Prince George's County has not implemented any stop sign monitoring systems under current law. The impact on local government finances depends on the extent to which any systems are deployed in Prince George's County, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The bill repeals the requirement that SHA place signs prominently providing notice that stop sign monitoring systems are in use on State highways (the placement of such signs is required by current law as a condition to deploy and use any such system). Instead, the bill requires the county to obtain the approval of SHA before placing a sign on a State highway.

Current Law:

Required Stops When Approaching a Stop Sign

Unless otherwise directed by a police officer or traffic control signal, the driver of a vehicle approaching a stop sign at an intersection must:

- stop at the near side of the intersection at a clearly marked stop line;
- stop at the near side of the intersection and, if there is no clearly marked stop line, before entering any crosswalk; and
- stop at the near side of an intersection and, if there is no crosswalk, at the nearest point before entering the intersection that gives the driver a view of traffic approaching on the intersecting roadway.

A violation of any of these requirements is a misdemeanor with a maximum \$500 fine. The prepayment penalty is \$90 with one point assessed against the license. If the violation contributes to an accident, the prepayment penalty is \$130 and three points must be assessed against the license.

Stop Sign Monitoring Systems – Prince George’s County

Chapter 678 authorizes, from July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2029, the use of stop sign monitoring systems on State and local highways located in a school zone in Prince George’s County to record violations of State law requiring obedience to stop signs. Unless the driver of the motor vehicle receives a citation from a police officer at the time, the owner or driver of a motor vehicle is subject to a civil penalty of up to \$40 if the motor vehicle is recorded by a stop sign monitoring system during commission of the violation. Similar to most other automated enforcement systems in use in the State, Chapter 678 requires:

- for an uncontested case, citation penalty revenues from a stop sign monitoring system controlled by a political subdivision to be paid directly to the political subdivision; and

- for a case contested in District Court, citation penalty revenues to be collected by the District Court and distributed in accordance with existing statutory provisions (generally these revenues accrue to the general fund).

A political subdivision is not explicitly authorized to recover the costs of implementing and administering stop sign monitoring systems from fines collected by the political subdivision as a result of violations enforced by stop sign monitoring systems. Nevertheless, a political subdivision may spend the “remaining balance” solely for public safety purposes, including pedestrian safety programs, as specified under other statutory provisions.

Chapter 678 includes additional requirements and specifications related to the use of stop sign monitoring systems in Prince George’s County. Notably, and among other provisions related to the use of stop sign monitoring systems in the county, the Act:

- specifies the admissibility of images recorded by a system as evidence in a judicial proceeding;
- requires a recorded image to include specified information;
- requires the county to prioritize the placement of systems within municipalities that have high violation rates;
- requires an agency to publish a specified public notice before beginning the use of any systems;
- requires Prince George’s County to prominently place signs on highways in the county providing notice that the systems are in use in the county;
- establishes a process that an agency must follow when issuing a citation and specifies the information that must be included on the citation;
- specifies the circumstances that the District Court may consider in defense of a violation;
- authorizes the Motor Vehicle Administration to refuse to register or reregister or suspend the registration of a motor vehicle when a citation is not paid and the violation is not contested, as specified;
- includes additional requirements for agencies, contractors, and the District Court related to the administration of the stop sign monitoring system program; and
- requires the Prince George’s County Department of Public Works and Transportation to report, by December 1, 2025, to the Governor and General Assembly on specified issues related to the stop sign monitoring system program.

State Revenues: To the extent the District Court collects fines for contested citations issued under the bill, general fund revenues increase from fiscal 2026 through 2029. Any

such impact depends on the extent to which stop sign monitoring systems are deployed in Prince George's County and the amount of the fine established for a violation (up to \$40).

State Expenditures: While current law requires SHA to install the signs required when stop sign monitoring systems are used on State highways *in school zones* (pursuant to the authority in current law), the bill instead requires the county to place the signs with the approval of SHA. Thus, Transportation Trust Fund expenditures that may have otherwise occurred under current law are avoided under the bill.

In addition, in anticipation of any stop sign monitoring systems being deployed by State and/or local agencies at school bus stops in Prince George's County, general fund expenditures for the District Court increase for programming changes necessary to collect payments for citations that may be issued under the bill. Programming-related costs total approximately \$10,920.

Local Fiscal Effect: Prince George's County advises that, although it has passed a law to implement a stop sign monitoring system program under Chapter 678, no program has yet been implemented. Moreover, the county notes that it will not implement a program if doing so would result in a deficit. Nevertheless, to the extent that a stop sign monitoring system program is implemented in the county, local operations and finances are affected in various ways from fiscal 2026 through 2029. Specifically, the bill may:

- increase local expenditures (due to implementation and administrative costs associated with the use of systems near school bus stops, as well as costs to place required signage);
- increase local revenues (due to additional citations) to the extent that stop sign monitoring systems are deployed in the county pursuant to the expanded authorization under the bill;
- decrease local revenues that could be realized under the framework set forth in current law by restricting the use of stop sign monitoring systems to only Monday through Friday between 6 a.m. and 8 p.m.; and
- affect how citation revenues are used by local governments, by authorizing cost-recovery for the implementation and administrative costs of stop sign monitoring systems (absent the bill, all citations revenues that may have been realized under the existing authorization for stop sign monitoring systems must be used for public safety purposes).

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

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

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Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510