

**Department of Legislative Services**  
Maryland General Assembly  
2026 Session

**FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE**  
**First Reader**

House Bill 1170 (Howard County Delegation)  
Environment and Transportation

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**Howard County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Expansion of Authorization**  
**Ho. Co. 9-26**

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This bill authorizes the placement and use of speed monitoring systems (*i.e.*, speed cameras) on U.S. Route 1 (Washington Boulevard), which is located in Howard County. Existing requirements and specifications that apply to other speed monitoring systems generally apply to the speed monitoring systems authorized by the bill.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund revenues from contested cases in the District Court may increase minimally as early as FY 2027 to the extent that additional speed cameras are installed, as discussed below. General fund expenditures are not anticipated to be materially affected, as discussed below.

**Local Effect:** Revenues and expenditures for Howard County increase to the extent that any speed cameras are installed pursuant to the bill’s authority, as discussed below.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal.

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**Analysis**

**Current Law:** 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 systems. Generally, pursuant to §21-809(d)(5) of the Transportation Article, a person who receives a citation, may:

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

With specified exceptions, penalty revenues from automated enforcement systems, including speed monitoring systems, must be paid (1) to the administering State agency or local jurisdiction, 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.

In general, citation revenues from speed monitoring systems used by a local jurisdiction (subject to limited exception) may be used to recover the costs of implementing and administering the program and any remaining balance may be used solely for public safety purposes, including pedestrian or highway safety programs. However, for any fiscal year in which the balance remaining after the costs of implementing and administering the systems is greater than 10% of the total revenues of the county for the fiscal year, the county must remit any funds that exceed 10% of the total revenues to the Comptroller.

For additional information, please see the **Appendix – Speed Monitoring Systems**.

**State Revenues:** Assuming that speed cameras are installed by Howard County pursuant to the bill's authority, the total number of speed camera citations issued may increase beginning as early as fiscal 2027. As a result of this potential increase in citations, the number of individuals opting for a trial in District Court may increase.

Accordingly, general fund revenues may increase minimally as fine revenues paid by individuals convicted in District Court are paid into the general fund. For context, the Judiciary advises that there were 6,479 requests for trial based on citations issued from speed monitoring systems in fiscal 2025.

**State Expenditures:** It is anticipated that any additional workload resulting from the bill's requirements does not materially affect general fund expenditures for the District Court.

The Judiciary advises that the significant expansion of automated enforcement systems in the State in recent years necessitates an upgrade to its case management system to improve citation intake and payment processing. For locally operated automated enforcement systems, the District Court administers citations and the payment of fines from contested citations only. For automated enforcement systems operated by a State agency, the District Court administers citations and the payment of fines for both contested and uncontested citations. The court currently processes these citations through a manual workflow that has struggled to keep pace with the expansion of automated enforcement systems. The Judiciary estimates the cost of an information technology upgrade to automate the process at approximately \$1.4 million; additional staffing costs may also be incurred.

However, because the Judiciary's need is not exclusively attributable to the bill, but rather due to the general expansion of automated enforcement systems, these costs are not reflected in this analysis.

**Local Fiscal Effect:** To the extent that Howard County chooses to implement a speed camera program pursuant to the authority granted by the bill:

- expenditures increase to install the speed cameras and required signs 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 county; and
- expenditures further increase as the penalty revenues are used for authorized purposes.

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### **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); Maryland Department of Transportation; Howard County; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - February 20, 2026  
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## Appendix – Speed Monitoring Systems

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### *Speed Monitoring Systems – Authorization and Administrative Requirements*

Speed monitoring systems are authorized to be used by the State Highway Administration (SHA), the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA), and local jurisdictions in specified locations as prescribed by State law. Most commonly, the systems are authorized for use in school zones; however, the systems may also be used on other specified highways and roadways, including Maryland Route 210 in Prince George’s County, Interstate 83 in Baltimore City and Baltimore County, and Maryland Route 200 in Montgomery County.

A speed monitoring system may not be used by a local jurisdiction unless its use is authorized by the governing body of the jurisdiction after reasonable notice and a public hearing. Before activating a speed monitoring system, SHA, MDTA, or a local jurisdiction, as applicable, must publish notice of the location of the system on its website and in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. Statute prescribes additional requirements applicable to monitoring systems in certain locations. For example, speed monitoring systems in school zones may only operate Monday through Friday from 6:00 a.m. through 8:00 p.m.

In addition, statute includes numerous specifications that, subject to limited exception, broadly apply to the use of speed cameras in the State, including those related to:

- the placement of new speed monitoring systems (and movement of existing systems), including the timeframe during which such systems may only be used to issue warnings instead of citations;
- the placement and location of speed limit signs approaching and within an area covered by a speed monitoring system;
- the designation of an official or employee to investigate and respond to questions or concerns about the speed camera program;
- required training for speed monitoring system operators;
- required annual calibration checks for each speed monitoring system;
- guidelines for if an agency or local jurisdiction hires a contractor to operate a speed camera program;
- procedures for the use of recordings captured by a speed monitoring system as evidence; and
- data collection and reporting.

## *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 with 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 (*e.g.*, directly to the political subdivision for most locally administered programs); or
- elect to stand trial in the District Court for the alleged violation.

Chapter 505 of 2025 established an escalating penalty structure that generally applies for alleged violations recorded by speed monitoring systems in the State, as shown below in **Exhibit 1**.

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**Exhibit 1**  
**Penalty Structure for Violations Recorded by Speed Monitoring Systems**  
**Effective October 1, 2025**

<u>Exceeding the Speed Limit by:</u>	<u>Maximum Penalty</u>
12 - 15 MPH, inclusive	\$40
16 - 19 MPH, inclusive	70
20 - 29 MPH, inclusive	120
30 - 39 MPH, inclusive	230
40 or more MPH	425

MPH: miles per hour

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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