

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 601 (Montgomery County Delegation)
Environment and Transportation

**Montgomery County - Stop Sign Monitoring Systems Pilot Program -
Gaithersburg and Rockville
MC 5-26**

This bill authorizes, for three years, the use of stop sign monitoring systems on State and local highways located in a school zone in the City of Gaithersburg or the City of Rockville to record violations of State law requiring obedience to stop signs; existing statutory provisions that apply for other stop sign monitoring systems used in the State apply for systems placed in accordance with the bill. By December 1, 2028, the City of Gaithersburg and City of Rockville must each report to the Governor and General Assembly on specified information about their respective stop sign monitoring system programs. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and terminates June 30, 2029.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund revenues increase beginning as early as FY 2027 and likely only through FY 2030 to the extent that additional stop sign monitoring system violations are contested under the bill, as discussed below. General fund expenditures are not anticipated to be materially affected, as discussed below.

Local Effect: Revenues and expenditures for the City of Gaithersburg and/or City of Rockville increase beginning as early as FY 2027 and likely only through FY 2030 to the extent that the cities install stop sign monitoring systems, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Stop Sign Monitoring Systems

The bill authorizes the use of stop sign monitoring systems on State and local highways in school zones in the City of Gaithersburg and the City of Rockville. Unless the driver of the motor vehicle received 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.

Existing statutory provisions that govern the use of stop sign monitoring systems in the State apply to the systems implemented under the bill.

Citation Revenues

Notably and similar to most other local automated enforcement system programs in the State, citation revenues from the stop sign monitoring systems implemented under the bill 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.

Reporting Requirements

By December 1, 2028, the City of Gaithersburg and the City of Rockville must each report to the Governor and General Assembly the following information related to their respective stop sign monitoring system programs:

- through October 1, 2028, the time period during which the systems were in use in the local jurisdiction and the number of warnings and citations issued over the report time period, by location and date;
- the costs associated with implementing and operating the systems;
- the revenue collected on a monthly basis as a result of violations recorded by the systems;
- appropriate locations for the deployment of the systems;
- the performance and reliability of the systems used by the local jurisdiction; and
- the effectiveness of the systems in reduction violations, crashes, and pedestrian injuries, as specified.

Current Law:

Automated Enforcement Systems – Generally

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

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.

State Fiscal Effect: To the extent the District Court collects fines for citations issued under the bill, general fund revenues increase beginning as early as fiscal 2027 and likely only through fiscal 2030 (although the bill terminates June 30, 2029, it is assumed that associated impacts continue for a brief period as issued citations are processed and paid). Any such impact depends on the extent to which the City of Gaithersburg or the City of Rockville elects to deploy the systems authorized under the bill and whether

citations are contested (and, therefore, paid into the general fund upon a guilty disposition). However, general fund revenues are likely to be minimal.

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: Revenues and expenditures for the City of Gaithersburg and/or the City of Rockville are affected as follows beginning as early as fiscal 2027 and likely only through fiscal 2030 (under the assumption above) to the extent that either city chooses to implement a stop sign monitoring system program pursuant to the bill's authorization:

- expenditures increase to install the devices and required signs and for other administrative expenses that may be incurred for the operation of the 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.
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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; Montgomery County; Department of Legislative Services

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