

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

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

Senate Bill 115  
(Senator West)  
Judicial Proceedings

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**Motor Vehicles - Automated Speed Enforcement - Improper Registration**

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This bill increases the civil penalties for a speed limit violation recorded by a speed monitoring system (*i.e.*, speed camera) or a work zone speed control system when the owner of the motor vehicle is a resident of the State and the vehicle is improperly registered in Virginia. The bill also requires the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to establish a searchable database of information regarding motor vehicles that are owned by residents of the State and improperly registered in Virginia; the database must be made available to any State or local entity seeking access for the purpose of issuing citations, as specified.

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**Fiscal Summary**

**State Effect:** General fund, special fund, and nonbudgeted revenues may increase beginning in fiscal 2027 due to the increased penalties established by the bill, as discussed below; special fund expenditures increase accordingly as the revenues are used for authorized purposes. General fund expenditures are not anticipated to be materially affected, as discussed below. MVA can establish the database using existing budgeted resources.

**Local Effect:** Local government revenues and expenditures may increase due to the increased penalties established by the bill, as discussed below.

**Small Business Effect:** Potential minimal.

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## Analysis

### Bill Summary:

#### *Citations and Penalties*

When a motor vehicle recorded by a speed monitoring system or work zone speed control system is improperly registered in Virginia, the citation that is mailed to the registered owner of the motor vehicle must include information advising the person alleged to be liable that driving a motor vehicle on a highway without proper registration is a violation of the Maryland Vehicle Law, as specified.

The bill increases the civil penalties for a violation recorded by a speed monitoring system and work zone speed control system when the owner of the motor vehicle is a resident of the State and the motor vehicle is improperly registered in Virginia, as shown below in **Exhibit 1**.

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#### **Exhibit 1** **Speed Camera and Work Zone Speed Camera Penalties** **Under Current Law and the Bill**

<u>Exceeding the Speed Limit By:</u>	<u>Speed Camera Maximum Penalty</u>		<u>Work Zone Maximum Penalty</u>	
	<u>Current Law</u>	<u>The Bill</u>	<u>Current Law</u>	<u>The Bill</u>
12 – 15 MPH, inclusive	\$40	\$250	\$60	\$300
16 – 19 MPH, inclusive	70	500	80	450
20 – 29 MPH, inclusive	120	750	140	600
30 – 39 MPH, inclusive	230	1,000	270	750
40 or more MPH	425	1,250	500	900

MPH: miles per hour

Notes: The increased penalties under the bill are applicable only when the owner of the motor vehicle is a resident of the State and the vehicle is improperly registered in Virginia.

Under both current law and the bill, penalties are doubled for a violation recorded by a work zone speed control system when workers are present in a work zone.

Source: Department of Legislative Services

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### *Searchable Database*

MVA must enter into an agreement or arrangement with an appropriate authorized representative of Virginia to obtain and regularly update information regarding motor vehicles that are owned by residents of the State and are improperly registered in Virginia.

MVA must compile the information into a searchable database and make the database available to any State or local entity seeking access for the purposes of issuing citations to the owners or drivers of motor vehicles for violations recorded by speed monitoring systems and work zone speed control systems.

### **Current Law:**

#### *Automated Enforcement Systems*

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. 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.

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

#### *Work Zone Speed Control Systems*

Chapter 17 of 2024 made various changes to the State's work zone speed control systems program by, among other things, increasing civil penalties for violations captured by work zone speed cameras and establishing an escalating penalty structure for violations captured by work zone speed cameras (effective January 1, 2025), as reflected above in Exhibit 1.

In general, revenues from the civil fines collected through the use of State operated work zone speed cameras must accrue to a special fund and be distributed first to the Department of State Police (DSP) and the State Highway Administration (SHA) to cover the costs of implementing and administering work zone speed cameras. Then, of the remaining balance

(1) 25% must be distributed to DSP to be used only for the purchase of replacement vehicles and related motor vehicle equipment used to outfit police vehicles, and (2) 75% must be distributed to the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) for highway and work zone safety purposes and SHA system preservation.

### *Vehicle Registration*

The Maryland Vehicle Law requires that each motor vehicle, trailer, semitrailer, and pole trailer driven on a highway must be properly registered. The Maryland Vehicle Law includes various exceptions to the registration requirement. For example, registration is not required for a farm tractor, a towed vehicle that is properly attached to a towing vehicle, or a vehicle owned by a new resident of Maryland during the first 60 days of residency, as specified.

**State Revenues:** The bill significantly increases the penalties associated with speed violations recorded by speed monitoring systems and work zone speed control systems, but only when the owner of the motor vehicle recorded is a resident of the State and the vehicle is improperly registered in Virginia. To the extent that additional fine revenues are collected under the bill, general fund, special fund, and nonbudgeted revenues increase accordingly.

Specifically, both SHA and the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) have speed monitoring systems in place; revenues from uncontested citations from these systems generally accrue to TTF and MDTA's nonbudgeted fund, respectively. In addition, revenues collected from speed monitoring systems placed by Prince George's County on Maryland Route 210 accrue to TTF. In the event that a citation is contested, and the individual is found guilty by the District Court, the revenues accrue to the general fund instead. Additionally, citation revenues collected through a State operated work zone speed control system program accrue to a special fund to subsequently be distributed to SHA and DSP for specified purposes.

The ultimate fiscal impact depends on the number of affected vehicles cited under the bill and the number of cases that are contested, which cannot be reliably estimated without actual experience under the bill. The Department of Legislative Services notes that revenues may also be affected to the extent that owner/driver behavior changes over time. *For informational purposes only*, MVA estimates that there are 77,550 motor vehicles owned by Maryland residents but registered in Virginia.

**State Expenditures:** As noted above, revenues from the civil fines collected through the use of State operated work zone speed cameras (and certain speed cameras operated by Prince George's County, as referenced above) must generally be distributed and used for specified authorized purposes by DSP and/or SHA. Thus, special fund expenditures

increase correspondingly to the extent additional revenues are distributed and used for such purposes.

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 IT 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 from speed monitoring system citations may increase for local jurisdictions authorized to use speed monitoring systems. Although there are a significant number of improperly registered vehicles in the State, as noted above, the ultimate revenue impact depends on if and how many of these vehicles receive speed monitoring system citations (and the extent to which owners/drivers modify behaviors as a result of the bill). As such, the revenue increase cannot be reliably estimated without actual experience under the bill. Local government expenditures increase as the penalty revenues are used for authorized purposes.

*For information purposes only*, Baltimore City advises that it issued about 80,000 speed camera citations for vehicles that were not registered in Maryland in calendar year 2024. Of this total, 48,258 of the citations were issued for vehicles registered in Virginia.

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## Additional Information

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

**Designated Cross File:** HB 510 (Delegate Cardin, *et al.*) - Environment and Transportation.

**Information Source(s):** Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of State Police; Maryland Department of Transportation; Baltimore City; Anne Arundel and Montgomery counties; Maryland Association of Counties; Department of Legislative Services

**Fiscal Note History:** First Reader - January 26, 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**

<b><u>Exceeding the Speed Limit by:</u></b>	<b><u>Maximum Penalty</u></b>
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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