

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

House Bill 1086 (Montgomery County Delegation)
Environment and Transportation

Montgomery County - Crosswalk Monitoring Systems - Authorization
MC 10-26

This bill authorizes the use of crosswalk monitoring systems in school zones in Montgomery County to record and cite instances of motor vehicles, in violation of State law, failing to come to a stop at a crosswalk when a pedestrian is using the crosswalk. By December 1, 2027, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation must report to the Governor and General Assembly on specified information about its crosswalk monitoring system program. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and terminates June 30, 2031.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for the Judiciary are not anticipated to be materially affected, as discussed below. General fund revenues from contested cases in the District Court may increase beginning in FY 2027, as discussed below. The bill is not anticipated to materially affect State Highway Administration (SHA) operations or finances.

Local Effect: Montgomery County expenditures and revenues increase beginning as early as FY 2027 to the extent that the county chooses to implement a crosswalk monitoring system program under the bill's authority, as discussed below.

Small Business Effect: Potential minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Crosswalk Monitoring Systems

The bill authorizes the use of crosswalk monitoring systems in Montgomery County (1) on highways located in a school zone maintained by a local jurisdiction, if authorized by the governing body of the local jurisdiction or (2) on State highways located in a school zone, if authorized by SHA. The systems may be used to record and cite violations when the driver of a vehicle fails to come to a stop at a crosswalk that is being used by a pedestrian.

The bill specifies that a crosswalk monitoring system (1) may not be used in a local jurisdiction unless its use is authorized by the governing body of the local jurisdiction by local law enacted after reasonable notice and a public hearing and (2) may only be used at a location approved by the Montgomery County Council. Montgomery County must prioritize the placement of the systems within municipalities that have high violation rates.

Citations and Penalties

Unless the driver of the motor vehicle received a citation from a police officer at the time of the violation, 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 crosswalk monitoring system during the commission of a violation. The District Court must prescribe a uniform citation form and civil penalty, which must be indicated on the citation, to be paid by a person who chooses to prepay the civil penalty without appearing in District Court. 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.

Citation revenue from crosswalk monitoring systems must be paid (1) to the administering 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.

Similar to other local automated enforcement programs in the State, the county may use citation revenues to recover the costs of implementing and administering the crosswalk monitoring system program and may spend any remaining balance solely for public safety purposes, including pedestrian or highway safety programs. 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.

Additional Specifications and Requirements

The bill includes additional specifications and requirements that apply for crosswalk monitoring systems, which are similar or identical to the specifications and requirements that apply to most other automated enforcement systems, including those related to:

- public notice that must be given before a crosswalk monitoring system is fully implemented;
- signage that must be placed to alert drivers that a system is in use;
- the mailing of warning notices, instead of citations;
- processes for determining liability under extenuating circumstances (*e.g.*, for rental vehicles, for stolen vehicles, when registration plates are stolen, etc.);
- processes for adjudication and administration of violations and citations by the District Court; and
- the payment of contractors who administer or process citations.

Required Report

By December 1, 2027, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation must report to the Governor and General Assembly on:

- through October 1, 2027, the time period during which crosswalk monitoring systems were in use in the county and the number of warnings and citations issued as a result of violations recorded by the systems, by location and date;
- the costs associated with implementing and operating the systems and 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; and
- the effectiveness of the systems in reducing violations, crashes, and pedestrian injuries in the county generally and in areas where the systems were implemented and used.

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 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 automated enforcement 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.

Crosswalks

The Maryland Vehicle Law requires the driver of a vehicle to come to a stop when a pedestrian crossing the roadway in a crosswalk is (1) on the half of the roadway on which the vehicle is traveling or (2) approaching from an adjacent lane on the other half of the roadway. This requirement does not apply where a pedestrian tunnel or overhead pedestrian crossing is provided or a traffic control signal is in operation.

Additionally, a pedestrian may not suddenly leave a curb or other place of safety and walk or run into the path of a vehicle, which is so close that it is impossible for the driver to yield.

State Fiscal Effect: As crosswalk monitoring systems are installed and used in the county and citations are subsequently issued, some of the individuals cited are likely to opt for a trial in District Court. Accordingly, general fund revenues increase, likely minimally, as fine revenues paid by individuals convicted in District Court are paid into the general fund. Because the bill terminates at the end of fiscal 2031, revenues are not anticipated beyond fiscal 2032, as cases from violations cited at the end of fiscal 2031 are fully adjudicated.

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 Montgomery County implements a crosswalk monitoring system program under the authority provided by the bill:

- expenditures increase to install the cameras and required signs and for other administrative expenses that may be incurred for the operation of the 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.

Because the bill terminates at the end of fiscal 2031, expenditures and revenues are not anticipated beyond fiscal 2032, as citations issued at the end of fiscal 2031 are fully paid and administered. Montgomery County can complete the required report using existing budgeted resources.

Additional Information

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

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Montgomery County; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

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