



Maryland Motor Truck Association

9256 Bendix Road, Suite 203, Columbia, MD 21045

Phone: 410-644-4600 Fax: 410-644-2537



HEARING DATE: March 4, 2021
BILL NO/TITLE: HB626 - Prince George's County - Vehicle Height Monitoring Systems PG 305-21
COMMITTEE: Environment & Transportation
POSITION: Oppose

Purpose: House Bill 626 would authorize Prince George's County and its 27 municipalities to use camera monitoring to enforce its truck routes. Currently only Baltimore City and Baltimore County have this authority.

Background: Baltimore City and Baltimore County have spent significant time working with trucking industry stakeholders to complete comprehensive reviews of legal truck routes, identify areas where trucks must have priority access, and develop maps showing the routes truck drivers should use. For those reasons, MMTA supported legislation that gave these jurisdictions the authority to use vehicle height monitoring systems to detect and fine trucks on prohibited roadways. However, HB626 does not require the same efforts from Prince George's County or its municipalities.

MMTA is concerned about the unintended consequences of increased camera enforcement in jurisdictions that have not taken similar steps, particularly given the high number of false positives these cameras generate, and the growing demand for home deliveries being generated by e-commerce.

Trucks that use restricted routes are not always committing a violation. Garbage collection, package delivery, recycling, home heating fuel, household goods movers and furniture delivery trucks operate regularly in neighborhoods. **Every route becomes legal if you have to access it to make a pickup or delivery. In Baltimore City, the initial abatement rate from these cameras was over 60% because trucks were legally allowed to travel on roadways with camera enforcement. Expansion of cameras into other jurisdiction will paralyze businesses having to demonstrate they were not committing a violation. This is a guilty until proven innocent system.**

Before other jurisdictions are allowed to use cameras to enforce their truck routes, they should be required to:

- Work with industry on the development of a clear map identifying legal and restricted routes.
- Work with industry to identify areas where there are high numbers of trucks on restricted routes and develop steps (e.g., communication, targeted outreach, signage) to address the challenge without cameras.

Any legislation to expand camera authority should include provisions that:

- Allow companies to transfer liability for violations to drivers. Drivers are the ones who choose to travel down restricted routes.
- Prevent citations to leasing/rental companies. They do not control where their trucks are driven.
- Establish a clear process for abating a citation when a truck was legally on a camera-enforced route.
- Establish a limit on the number of cameras that may be used to ensure enforcement is focused on those areas with significant restricted truck traffic.

MMTA is committed to working with Prince George's County to address these challenges, but the steps noted above should be undertaken prior to the passage of any legislation expanding camera enforcement. In lieu of the version of HB626 that has been introduced, MMTA urges the Committee to amend this legislation to require Prince George's County and any municipalities requesting this technology to form a workgroup to go through these processes and report back to the Prince George's County Delegation. Attached is proposed language. Without these steps, MMTA would ask the Committee for an unfavorable report.

About Maryland Motor Truck Association: Maryland Motor Truck Association is a not-for-profit trade association representing the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 1,000 members, MMTA is committed to supporting and advocating for a safe, efficient, and profitable trucking industry across all sectors and industry types, regardless of size, domicile, or type of operation.

For further information, contact: Louis Campion, (c) 443-623-4223

HB626 Proposed Amendments
Offered by Maryland Motor Truck Association

Before the installation of any vehicle height monitoring systems, the governing body of Prince George's County and any municipalities within its boundaries that are interested in implementing an enforcement program utilizing vehicle height monitors shall establish a workgroup including the Maryland Motor Truck Association and other commercial transportation industry representatives to evaluate and make recommendations to the Prince Georges County Administration and the Prince Georges County Delegation regarding the utilization of vehicle height monitoring system as an enforcement measure. In conducting its evaluation and recommendations the workgroup shall:

- Evaluate existing truck routes;
- Develop a map of truck routes and restrictions and provide the map to operators using the best available technology;
- Identify areas for vehicle height monitoring enforcement;
- Evaluate existing signage and identify locations where signage could be improved;
- Develop a process for a vehicle owner to easily contest an erroneously issued citation without the necessity of a court hearing;
- Develop a process for the owner of a vehicle to identify and transfer liability to the operator of a vehicle responsible for incurring a citation;
- Exempt certain types of vehicles from enforcement by a vehicle height monitoring system; and
- Determine the overall number of vehicle height monitoring systems that may be placed in a jurisdiction.

The Workgroup shall report its findings and recommendations to the Prince Georges County Administration and the Prince Georges County Delegation by _____.

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