



**BILL HENRY**  
OFFICE OF THE COMPTROLLER

City Hall – Room 204  
100 Holliday St Baltimore, MD 21202

March 26, 2022

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chairman  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Senate of Maryland  
Miller Senate Office Building, 2 East Wing  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis MD 21401

Dear Chairman Smith:

I am writing in support of House Bill 73, “Complete Streets and Safe Routes to School Programs – Funding” and respectfully requesting that the Judicial Proceedings Committee pass HB 73 with the amendments proposed by Senator Charles Sydnor. HB 73 is a local bill, applicable only to Baltimore City. I commend Delegate Lewis for her leadership in sponsoring HB 73 and for her commitment to improving transportation infrastructure in Baltimore City, as she has done every year since the 2020 session.

As Comptroller of Baltimore City, I am charged with acting as the fiscal watchdog for the City’s resources. I know only too well how urgently the City requires upgrades to its transportation infrastructure including pedestrian, bicycle, and ADA improvements as well as roadway repairs. HB 73 will provide a dedicated revenue source for this purpose.

House Bill 73 largely accomplishes its intended purpose of dedicating camera revenue to safety enhancements - whether from red light cameras, speed cameras, school bus monitoring cameras, or vehicle height monitoring cameras - but the bill as originally drafted could be open to misinterpretation. That is why Senator Sydnor is introducing amendments at my request: to make explicit that such revenue is only to be used for infrastructure and other capital improvements, whether they are transportation-related or public safety-related. The amendments also specifically codify that funding for transportation infrastructure projects must conform to the criteria set forth in the City’s Complete Streets Law. In short, the amendments remove any ambiguity as to how the money can be used; it should expressly benefit the City residents and visitors who walk, bike, ride transit, and drive on City streets and sidewalks.

The Baltimore City Department of Transportation has an estimated \$1.5 billion in deferred maintenance needs. Since the City’s red light and speed camera program was established in 2017, it has generated over \$80 million for the City. In that same time period, Baltimore has paid over \$5 million in settlements resulting from improperly maintained transportation infrastructure.

Camera revenue should be fenced off and only used for public safety and transportation-related capital improvements. Unfortunately, in 2021 \$6.5 million from the revenue raised by traffic camera was transferred to the Baltimore Police Department to pay for overtime costs. In 2018, \$4 million in camera

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revenue was transferred to the Baltimore City Fire Department. Backfilling budgets was not the purpose of the program. Instead, this revenue was always intended for projects that enhance access, mobility, economic development, attractive public spaces, health, and well-being for all those who live, work, play, study, or worship in Baltimore City.

I have already provided the text of the amendments to Senator Sydnor, but they are reproduced here for your reference:

On page 2, in line 24, strike “safety purposes” and insert “SAFETY-RELATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE”.

On page 3, in line 16, strike “SAFETY” and insert “SAFETY-RELATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE”.

On page 3, in line 19, after “AND” insert “IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MODAL HIERARCHY DEFINED IN”

On page 4, in line 16, strike “SAFETY” and insert “SAFETY-RELATED CAPITAL IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE”.

On page 4, in line 19, after “AND” insert “IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE MODAL HIERARCHY DEFINED IN”.

For all these reasons, I respectfully request that the Committee grant HB 73 a favorable vote, with the amendments proposed by Senator Sydnor. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 410-396-4577 or via email at [comptroller@baltimorecity.gov](mailto:comptroller@baltimorecity.gov).

Sincerely,



Bill Henry  
Baltimore City Comptroller

CC: Members of the Baltimore City Senate Delegation