

# **Talbot County Local Letter**

Uploaded by: Christopher Adams

Position: FAV

**CHRISTOPHER T. ADAMS**  
*Legislative District 37B*  
Caroline, Dorchester, Talbot,  
and Wicomico Counties

Economic Matters Committee

*Subcommittees*

Banking, Consumer Protection,  
and Commercial Law

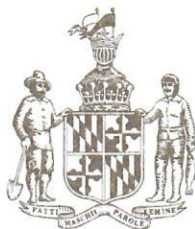
Business Regulation

Property and Casualty Insurance

Public Utilities

*Chair*

Eastern Shore Delegation



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 405  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3343 • 301-858-3343  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3343  
Christopher.Adams@house.state.md.us

**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 7, 2023

The Honorable Kumar Barve  
Chair  
Environment and Transportation Committee  
6 Bladen Street, Room 251  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: HB700-Talbot County-Speed Monitoring Systems-Intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue**

Dear Chairman Barve,

This letter is to advise the Environment and Transportation Committee that the above-referenced bill was voted on by the Talbot County Delegation and received a unanimous favorable vote.

The vote of the Delegation members is attached.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Chris Adams", written over a horizontal line.

Christopher T. Adams  
Talbot County Delegation Chair

## **House letter 020723.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cheryl Lewis

Position: FWA

BOARD MEETING:  
2ND AND 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

(410) 226-5122



101 Market Street  
P.O. Box 339  
Oxford, Maryland 21654

## Commissioners of Oxford

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February 7, 2023

Delegate Kumar P. Barve  
Environmental and Transportation Committee  
Room 251  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill HB700: Talbot County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue**

Chairman Barve,

Please accept this letter as written testimony in favor of HB700, authorizing the placement and use of a speed monitoring system at the intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue in Oxford, Talbot County, Maryland. Given the nature of the Town of Oxford and the dangerous conditions upon entering the Town, as explained below, the placement and use of a speed monitoring system is necessary for the safety of town residents and visitors.

The Town of Oxford is a waterfront town in Talbot County with historic homes, tree-lined streets, picket fences, inns and taverns, a town beach, and water views in every direction. Oxford prides itself as being a walkable and bikeable community. The entire length of Oxford stretches just over 1 mile, which contributes to its walkability. Aside from St. Michaels, Oxford is the only town in Talbot County that offers a public beach and waterfront dining, bringing many visitors during warmer months.

Maryland Route 333 is a two-lane state highway that runs 9.79 miles from the Town of Easton to the Oxford Bellevue Ferry located at the end of Town. Route 333 is the only road access into Oxford and goes no further than Oxford, ending at the water. The speed limit on Maryland Route 333 changes from 50 mph to 35 mph one-third of a mile from the incorporated boundary of Oxford. The speed limit on Route 333 reduces further to 25 mph at the incorporated boundary. The Oxford Volunteer Fire Department and the Oxford Community Center, both of which are frequently accessed by pedestrians on foot or bicycle, are located on Route 333 three hundred and fifty (350) yards from the incorporated boundary. The Oxford Community Center houses the Oxford Kid's Camp during the summer with children traveling to and from that location daily on foot or bicycle.

# Commissioners of Oxford

The entry to the Town via Maryland Route 333 is in a densely populated residential neighborhood, with porches a few feet from the road, children and adults walking and biking along the road, and tourists wandering the streets. Within a few hundred feet drivers entering Town go from a vast, open road, to a residential community. Entering the Town via a state highway causes many drivers to exceed speed limits as they fail to slow down upon entry.

In the summer of 2019, the Town experienced a tragedy when the President of the Oxford Voluntary Fire Company Auxiliary left her house on Bonfield Avenue, directly across the street from the firehouse, to cross Route 333 to the firehouse for an auxiliary meeting. Within seconds of stepping from her yard onto Route 333, the Auxiliary President was struck and killed by a vehicle entering town at a speed three times greater than the posted speed limit of 25 mph. Without a speed monitoring system incentivizing drivers to slow down, the Town fears a similar accident will occur again.

The Town has raised concerns over speeders on Route 333 for many years and although we have worked with the State Highway Administration on reducing speeds prior to the town limits and installing traffic calming processes, we are still experiencing the major issue of drivers approaching town at speeds that well exceed the posted limits. To help mitigate the problem, the Town installed a flashing “This is Your Speed” sign at the entrance to town a few years ago in hopes that over time drivers would adhere to the posted speed limit. However, recent data shows that the Town’s efforts have not solved the problem. In fact, during the recent six-month period from July to December 2022, 3,000 cars were clocked approaching the town over the speed of 45 mph in the 35 mph zone, with one third of these vehicles doing 50 to 75 mph.

Although the Town has a police department, given the size of the Town, it employs only three (3) officers at its maximum capacity, and schedules only one officer on duty at a time. With these limitations, it is virtually impossible to regulate speed at the entrance of Town in a deterring manner without causing safety concerns elsewhere. In addition, many Town residents and visitors recognize the limited size of the Department and are not deterred from speeding.

Based on the limited capacity of the Oxford Police Department, the reduction in speed from 50 mph to 25 mph, the change from the wide state highway road to a narrow town road, the residences surrounding Maryland Route 333, the amount of pedestrian traffic, and the location of the Oxford Volunteer Fire Department and Oxford Community Center, the Town believes an unduly hazardous condition exists, as evidenced by the tragic event in 2019. The Town believes that the addition of a speed camera will deter individuals from speeding until such time that the Town can develop and implement other effective means for reducing driving speed on Maryland Route 333.

The Town anticipates placing the speed monitoring system on Maryland Route 333 within the incorporated boundary of the town at a location that all drivers must pass. The use of a speed monitoring system in conjunction with a real-time speed awareness sign the Town utilizes upon the entry into Town is intended to educate drivers. The town currently has one

# Commissioners of Oxford

permanently installed device at the entrance to town that posts real-time speeds approximately 250' prior to the proposed location of this unit. The existing post will support new signage indicating a speed monitoring system is in use. The town also has a similar device located on a portable trailer that posts real-time speeds, which can be used at an alternative location, and to which new signage indicating a speed monitoring system in use can also be attached.

The placement will sufficiently remind drivers that do exceed the posted speed limit and subsequently receive citations that the speed limit must be obeyed or citations will continue to be issued. The Town believes the speed monitoring system will effectively change driving behavior and reduce the number of speeders entering the Town as it will be open and obvious and a fine that drivers will not want to continuously pay.

The Commissioners of Oxford realize the volume of traffic coming into the town is not comparable to the locations where speed cameras have been installed on highways in larger cities and do not anticipate receiving any revenues from the speed camera. The Town's intention is to work with an authorized company to provide the speed cameras with no anticipated revenues funneling back to the Town. The Town understands that it may be necessary to actually subsidize the cost and believes that is a necessary expense for the safety of its citizens and tourists.

In the event that revenue is generated, the Town will work with MDOT to use the funds to further address the dangerous condition by implementing additional traffic calming mechanisms such as rumble strips or other pavement surface treatments and street trees to indicate to drivers that they have entered a residential area. As provided by the Maryland Code Ann., Transportation Article § 21-809, the Town will be required to introduce and pass a resolution or ordinance at a public hearing prior to placing the speed camera at the proposed location or issuing any citations. As part of that resolution or ordinance, the Town will receive public input and establish specific regulations for the handling of any revenue from the speed camera to specifically address the traffic concerns.

For further clarification, there are numerous additional opportunities, with varying costs, which cannot effectively address the issue of speeding on their own, but may increase the effectiveness if implemented in addition to the speed monitoring system. All opportunities are difficult on a small-town budget, but are being discussed in hopes of accomplishing them in the future, after placing the speed monitoring system.

In September of 2019 the Town held a well-attended community meeting regarding citizen concerns with this unduly hazardous condition. MDOT representatives and elected state officials were also in attendance, as Maryland Route 333 is a state highway. Numerous traffic calming projects, which will take significant funds and support from the State Highway Administration, were identified and discussed at this meeting including the following:

- Installation of electronic speed awareness signs (which we have done with financial assistance from a private memorial fund for this purpose)

## Commissioners of Oxford

- Installation of a speed monitoring system which would issue citations (MDOT did not object to this, but did clarify legislative action would be required)
- Installation of faux brick crosswalks at areas of Maryland Route 333 within town that are locations of frequent pedestrian crossing to direct pedestrian traffic and serve to alert drivers that pedestrian crossing is anticipated due to the change in color and pattern in the roadway (we have discussed this with MDOT and have hopes of implementing in the near future)
- Installation of faux brick crosswalks on side roads to divert some pedestrian traffic off of the main road where possible
- Incorporation of painted treatments along the shoulders of the state road as the road enters town that will assist in visually narrowing the road for drivers (MDOT has placed some treatments within the last 30 days)
- Tree planting along the highway prior to entering town to alert drivers to the fact that they are entering a populated area
- Improved 25 MPH signage applied directly to the road throughout town, as the street signs can be lost in all of the other visually exciting elements
- In coordination with MDOT, the complete revamping of the entry utilizing a division or island for the purpose of slowing traffic down, streetscaping, including the addition of sidewalks to provide a change from the wide-open rural area entering into the residential community

### *Conclusion*

The Town appreciates your consideration of this very narrow legislation permitting the Town of Oxford to address the very serious issue of drivers entering the town at excessive speeds. This has been an ongoing problem for many, many years. The Town strongly believes that HB700 will have a positive impact for the small town of Oxford without inconveniencing any other community or citizenry and we request your favorable recommendation and approval of HB700. Please let me know if you need any further information regarding our request.

On behalf the Commissioners of Oxford,



Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager

# **HB700-E&T-ltr of support-Commissioners of Oxford.p**

Uploaded by: Delegate Chris Adams

Position: FWA



BOARD MEETING:  
2ND AND 4TH TUESDAY OF EACH MONTH

(410) 226-5122



101 Market Street  
P.O. Box 339  
Oxford, Maryland 21654

## Commissioners of Oxford

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February 7, 2023

Delegate Kumar P. Barve  
Environmental and Transportation Committee  
Room 251  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Re: House Bill HB700: Talbot County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue**

Chairman Barve,

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# Commissioners of Oxford

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# Commissioners of Oxford

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## Commissioners of Oxford

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### *Conclusion*

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On behalf the Commissioners of Oxford,



Cheryl Lewis, Town Manager

# **HB700-ENT-Amendment-Talbot County Delegation.pdf**

Uploaded by: Delegate Chris Adams

Position: FWA

BY: Talbot County Delegation  
(To be offered in the Environment and Transportation Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 700  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, strike beginning with “and” in line 9 down through “Avenue” in line 10 and substitute “the Town of Oxford”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 3, in line 23, strike “**STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION**” and substitute “**TOWN OF OXFORD**”; and strike beginning with “AND” in line 25 down through “**AVENUE**” in line 26 and substitute “**THE TOWN OF OXFORD**”.

# **HB700-ENT-Ltr of SUPPORT-Talbot County Sheriff's O**

Uploaded by: Delegate Chris Adams

Position: FWA



TALBOT COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE

28712 Glebe Road, Suite 1  
Easton, Maryland 21601



Office  
410-822-1020

Joseph J. Gamble  
Sheriff

Fax  
410-770-8110

February 24, 2023

The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chair  
Environment and Transportation Committee  
House Office Building, Room 251  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Delegate Barve:

I am writing to you in support of House Bill 700 Talbot County – Speed Monitoring Systems – Intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue ("HB700").

Currently, the Town of Oxford has speed limit signs posted to reduce vehicle speed from 50 mph to 35 mph just as you enter the Town and again to 25 mph just before you get to the Oxford firehouse. Just a few years ago, an individual driving his vehicle, in excess of 80 mph, hit and killed a local longtime volunteer in front of the firehouse. A speed camera would deter speeders and slow visitors/tourists down. Locals slow down, but people unfamiliar with the area fly by well into the Town. The Town of Oxford only has one way into Town.

The Oxford Police Department is currently understaffed and cannot have a designated officer sit in the affected area all day and night. I have never been a fan of placing speed cameras just anywhere, but this speed camera is necessary. My office attends Town meetings and communicates with the Town Manager on a regular basis. The Town's Chief of Police retired this week and my office is filling in until a new Chief is hired. Currently, Oxford has one officer, with my office filling the gaps.

Your support of HB 700 will ensure that the streets in the Town of Oxford are safe. More importantly, HB 700 would help to prevent any future tragic pedestrian accidents.



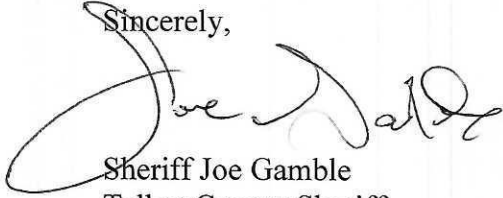
The Honorable Kumar Barve, Chair

February 24, 2023

Page 2

Thank you for your consideration and support of HB 700.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joe Gamble", with a large, stylized initial "J" and "G".

Sheriff Joe Gamble  
Talbot County Sheriff

cc: Christopher Adams, Delegate, 37B  
Thomas Hutchison, Delegate, 37B  
Johnny Mautz, Senator, 37B  
Cheryl Lewis, Oxford Town Manager

# **HB0700 - SHA - Talbot County Speed Monitoring Syst**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

March 2, 2023

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve  
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 700 – Talbot County – Speed Monitoring Systems –  
Intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue***

Dear Chair Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 700 but offers the following information and amendments for the Committee's consideration.

House Bill 700 authorizes the use of one speed monitoring system at the intersection of Maryland 303 and Bonfield Avenue. After a permit is issued by MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA), the system would be placed in SHA right-of-way then operated and maintained by the local jurisdiction. House Bill 700 directs the revenues generated from the speed camera to be distributed to MDOT SHA and used on safety improvements at the intersection of Maryland 333 and Bonfield Avenue.

The SHA proposes that House Bill 700 be amended to expand the area that the revenues generated from the speed camera can be utilized to improve. By incorporating a larger geographic area, SHA could make the best use of the revenues generated from the camera to improve pedestrian safety in Talbot County.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates on House Bill 700.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitch Baldwin  
Acting Deputy Director  
Office of Policy and Legislative Services  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
410-310-1056

Pilar Helm  
Director  
Office of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090