
February 29, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 974 – Prince George's County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Indian Head Highway PG 306-24

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information on House Bill 974 for the Committee's consideration.

MDOT's top priority is the safety of all transportation users, guided by the National Roadway Safety Strategy (NRSS) and the Safe System Approach. Section 21-809(c) of the Transportation Article of the Maryland Annotated Code requires civil penalties for violations recorded by speed cameras on MD 210 in Prince George's County not to exceed \$40. House Bill 974 proposes a graduated fine system in which penalties increase according to how many miles over the posted speed limit the violation is recorded, and according to how many repeat offenses are recorded within a certain period.

Traffic-related fatalities are the highest they have been since 2007. Traffic deaths related to speeding are particularly prevalent along corridors in low to medium density suburban and suburban activity center contexts like MD 210, especially given that most speeding-related fatalities in the United States occur on non-interstate rural and urban roadways. Since 2007 more than 90 people have died in vehicle crashes on MD 210, and the Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) which includes the State's federally-mandated Vulnerable Road User (VRU) Safety Assessment, identifies MD 210 in Prince George's County as a high-risk area in the State.

For several years, the State Highway Administration (SHA) has been engaged in a robust effort to address safety issues on MD 210, including coordinating with the County and local community groups; completing a feasibility study for a low-stress bicycle alternative route; partnering with the University of Maryland Center for Advanced Transportation Technology (CATT) Laboratory; installing quick-build treatments like flex posts and quick-curbs; and implementing other traffic calming measures to control travel speeds at intersection approaches and at the corridor level. And, to address speeding conditions on MD 210, the Prince George's County Police Department continues to deploy more portable speed cameras at various times and locations along the corridor.

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Increased penalties for speeding are valuable tools in promoting road safety and are most effective when implemented as part of a comprehensive approach that includes education, enforcement, and especially addressing underlying factors contributing to speeding behavior. In this case, interventions focused on education, awareness campaigns, and addressing underlying motivations would be effective complements to penalties.

MDOT's safety programs are designed to help Maryland prioritize efforts to achieve zero deaths and serious injuries by 2030. As Maryland works towards eliminating traffic-related serious injuries and deaths, MDOT is applying a data driven approach to shape the strategies and metrics that guide our safety programs. Resources like the NRSS, 2050 Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, SHSP, Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP), and the Maryland Highway Safety Office's (MHSO) Crash Data Dashboard provide a clear vision for the State to implement speed management strategies using a Safe System Approach.

Maryland's interim Vision Zero target is to reduce the Statewide five-year average for speed related traffic fatalities to 41 or fewer by December 31, 2025. The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberations of House Bill 974.

Respectfully submitted,

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