

March 6, 2024

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 406 – School Bus Stops – Monitoring Cameras and Safety Measures

Dear Chair Smith and Committee members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration on Senate Bill 406.

Senate Bill 406 would require law enforcement to issue warnings for first time offenses related to automated school bus monitoring violations issued to vehicles traveling in the opposite direction on an undivided road with four or more lanes. Additionally, the bill requires the State Highway Administration (SHA), in consultation with law enforcement agencies, to identify high incidence locations for school bus camera violations along State highways in Montgomery County and develop a feasibility study and plan for improved safety measures at these locations. SHA must report its findings to various stakeholders in the county and the Montgomery County Delegation by December 31, 2024.

The SHA does not currently participate in Montgomery County’s school bus monitoring program and does not have access to violation data. For SHA to meet the requirements of Senate Bill 406, law enforcement would need to share the relevant data with SHA. In addition, SHA would need a clear definition of “high incidence” locations.

While Senate Bill 406 does not require SHA to construct medians at high incidence locations, the bill requires SHA to consider the feasibility of constructing medians on undivided State highways at locations with high incidence of violations. SHA cannot speak to the specific feasibility or costs of performing this work, as these will depend on the locations identified and the level of effort required to integrate medians at the site. However, the addition of medians on undivided highways would result in significant right-of-way needs along these corridors, which may require land acquisition or removal or modification of travel lanes. This has the potential to impact traffic patterns within the corridor and deny more reasonable, effective, and practicable safety countermeasures. Additional considerations for this type of work include utility relocations, relocation of bus stops, and impacts to transit and local amenities.

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The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 406.

Respectfully submitted,

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