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DEPUTY SPEAKER PRO TEM

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1173

Montgomery County – Speed Monitoring Systems – High-Risk Highways
House Environment and Transportation Committee
March 7, 2025

Good afternoon Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to present today on my legislation – HB 1173. This is a nearly identical reintroduction of last year’s bill which was voted unanimously out of the House Delegation last session as well as this session.

The bill will:

1. Give Montgomery County government the authority to place speed cameras on High Injury Network (HIN) locations in Montgomery County. These are the locations that are at highest risk for motor vehicle crashes;
2. Require any fines collected to be used to fund the study, design, and construction of safety-related efforts; and
3. Require an evaluation of the speed monitoring systems to determine their efficacy every 5 years.

I offer a Sponsor amendment today that will allow roadways or intersections to be identified in the municipality’s, county’s, or state’s most recent Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Vision Zero Plan, or a similar road safety plan.

As of December 1st, 2024, there have been 510 fatalities in Maryland, 82 of which were speed related. In Montgomery County we lost 45 of our neighbors in fatal car crashes. In its commitment to eliminate transportation fatalities and serious injury by 2030, the Montgomery Countywide Policy and Planning Vision Zero team

studied the county's crash history and conditions that lead to incidents on our roadways. There were two key findings from these studies:

1. Most serious injuries and fatalities are located along the county's arterials, such as Georgia Avenue, Old Georgetown Road, and Veirs Mill Road.
 - a. These roads have speed limits that exceed 35 mph in most if not all segments and these roads also include both residential and business districts. To limit the placement of speed cameras to residential areas and school zones, ignores the fact that "*On a per-intersection or per-roadway segment basis, crash risk is types.*"
2. While bicycle and pedestrian crashes are less frequent than motor vehicle crashes, they are more likely to result in a serious injury or fatality.

As speed increases, so does the risk of severe injury and death. The risk of death for a pedestrian hit at 23 mph is 10 percent but jumps up to 50 percent at 42 mph. Once speeds hit 58 mph, the risk of death is 90%. With 45 percent of the U.S. population admitting to driving more than 15 mph over the posted speed limit, in areas in which the speed limit is 40 or 45 mph, we can expect drivers going at speeds of 55 to 60 mph – meaning a pedestrian struck on those roads is likely to have a 90% risk of death.

Luckily, Montgomery County already has a successful automated speed enforcement program. The program began in 2007 on streets with speed limits of 35mph or lower and school zones. In 2009, the state increased the enforcement threshold from 11 to 12mph over the speed limit. And, in 2012, the county launched its corridor approach, in which cameras are moved periodically along a roadway segment. The long-term effects of the program were studied and found:

- Speed cameras were associated with a 10% reduction in mean speeds and a 62% reduction in the likelihood that a vehicle was traveling more than 10 mph above the speed limit at camera sites.
- The overall effect of the camera program in its modified form, including both the law change and the corridor approach, was a 39% reduction in the likelihood that a crash resulted in an incapacitating or fatal injury.

While there are varying factors that can contribute to crash injuries and fatalities, we know nearly a third of fatalities were speeding-related, and when a collision involves a non-motorist, it is more likely to result in severe injury or death. MC 17-25 would address these issues on our most dangerous roadways and increase

compliance with speed limits. If we are going to meet Vision Zero, we need to take every step to ameliorate the dangerous conditions on our roads.

Montgomery County prioritizes High Injury Network Projects in their [Vision Zero 2024-2025 Work Plan](#) by implementing safety countermeasures on identified high-risk road segments and intersections which the County must coordinate with the State for state-maintained portions of the network. In a recent Vision Zero update, ([Vision Zero FY 24 Report](#)), the County found that serious and fatal crashes were down 11% compared to 2015-2019 annual average. High injury networks experienced a 28% crash reduction compared to a 5% increase on non-HIN roadways. Enhanced safety projects, outreach, and law enforcement were prioritized in these HIN areas, contributing to this decline. The County recommends a continued focus on HIN areas to accelerate these reductions and achieve our goal of zero deaths by 2030.

I'm proud to be partnering with the Montgomery County Police Department, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation, and community advocates to advance this legislation.

This bill is a reintroduction of last year's legislation which was voted out of the House of Delegates 106-26. I once again urge a favorable report.