

HB 0988

Written Testimony of Raymond Lombardo, 2316 Hidden Valley Ln, Silver Spring, MD 20904

Committee members:

I am writing to support this legislation to install speed cameras on the ICC as an important first step to help address the rampant speeding and racing that occurs on the ICC. Those of you who live near this road, or regularly use it, know from personal experience and/or constituent complaints that speeding on this road has gotten out of hand. While this legislation may have been controversial 10-15 years ago, prior to the widespread adoption of speed cameras in the State of Maryland, the ubiquitous nature of speed cameras in Maryland today makes this bill an absolute “no brainer” in plain terms to help bring average speeds down, increase safety, and reduce noise. Arguments against this bill are either “straw man” arguments or arguments designed to preserve bureaucratic prerogative.

As I noted, the installation of cameras on the ICC is a first step. Many of you are aware, or should be aware, that during nice weather, particular on weekend evenings, the ICC is used as a racetrack for “crotch rocket” style motorcyclists and other drivers who race. These bikes often have no plates, or the plates are obscured so that they cannot be captured by cameras. And state law prohibits police chase. So, unfortunately, we have a class of lawless motorists who are most deserving of apprehension and punishment from a public safety and noise perspective, but who routinely escape any consequence for their antisocial and dangerous behavior. The lack of effective response to this public safety issue manifested itself in the horrible injuries suffered by Montgomery County Police Sgt. Patrick Kepp, who was trying to apprehend a dangerous, speeding motorist with a long list of prior dangerous driving offenses. This is all a long way of saying that while I appreciate the Montgomery County Delegation’s support for this measure, and support its passage, I would also urge you all to recognize that this is a first step, not a last step, and that the State needs to take other actions that credibly deter reckless speeding on the ICC and other state highways where it is a problem. Whether that solution is the return of Montgomery County’s helicopter, the use of drones, or some other solution that the State Police recommend, is open for further discussion. But the current state of affairs is simply not defensible because the only motorists who are ticketed are those who at least have the decency to stop when they see flashing lights, whereas those who are the real problem escape.

Thank you for your time and attention, and I appreciate your efforts on behalf of our State.

Sincerely,

Raymond Lombardo