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Members of Maryland General Assembly
Environment & Transportation Committee
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: Support for HB0349-Speed Monitoring System for MD 210 – The Highway of Death

Dear Delegates:

Thank you for your public service to the residents of Maryland. I know you agree, regardless of your political leanings, that every life precious, priceless and worth saving. As public servants and fellow humans, we must do all that we can to save a life.

Supporting HB0349 does just that. Some drivers believe that roadways are their personal routes to travel to get to their destinations at any rate of speed and as reckless and distracted as they want to be. No care or concern for fellow drivers and other users of the roadways seem to be of importance to them.

Speed limits were placed on America's highways and roadways for a reason – to allow for all of us to get to our destinations safely without harming, injuring or killing another driver, pedestrian or cyclists. The fact is the higher the speed, the increase in the likelihood of serious injuries and fatalities will occur.

Maryland 210 in Prince George's County has seen more than enough fatalities so much so to be deemed the Highway of Death. It unfortunately leads the state and the northeast corridor in fatalities.

Our County's new traffic cameras are doing their jobs in ticketing once a driver is clocked 11 miles over the speed limit. However, the \$40 fine is not much of a deterrent, and we have many repeat offenders. We also have reckless drivers, driving in excess of 100 mph, which almost 50+ miles per hour over the speed limit. They are debased and have no regard for their own life and the lives of others driving or walking around them. HB0349 attempts to address this issue.

I am copying the details about this bill of my fellow member of the MD 210 Traffic Safety Committee who is present to provide oral testimony and answer questions:

*“I am writing to respectfully urge your support for **HB 349-25 (SB 485)**, legislation that would implement a tiered fine structure for speed camera violations on **MD 210 (Indian Head Highway)**. This road has tragically claimed **95 lives over the past 17 years**, making it one of the deadliest in Maryland.*

As a founding member of the MD 210 Traffic Safety Committee, I have worked for seven years to make this road safer. This legislation is a critical step in reducing fatalities and protecting the lives of motorists and pedestrians on this high-risk corridor.

Why MD 210 Needs Tiered Fines

*Since 2009, Maryland has enforced a flat **\$40 fine** for all speed camera violations, regardless of how far a driver exceeds the speed limit. While this may deter minor infractions, it is ineffective against **extreme speeders**—some driving at over **100 MPH**, endangering countless lives.*

*A **tiered fine structure** would ensure penalties are proportional to the severity of the violation. By imposing higher fines on drivers who significantly exceed the speed limit, this bill would deter the most dangerous speeding behaviors while maintaining fairness for lesser infractions.*

Key Features of HB 349-25

- *Aligns with the **Maryland Road Worker Protection Act**: fines range from **\$60 to \$500**, based on the level of violation.*
- *Addresses excessive speeding, such as the **300+ vehicles per day** clocked at **67 MPH or more** and those traveling at reckless speeds like **190 MPH**.*
- *Maintains fairness while enhancing enforcement effectiveness, encouraging safer driving behaviors.*

Evidence of Speeding on MD 210

Recent data from MD 210 speed cameras highlights the need for stronger deterrents:

- ***Citations decreased by 72%** in just five months (August to December 2024), showing **cameras are effective at reducing overall speeding**.*
- *However, during the same period, **16,000 vehicles** still traveled at **71 MPH or more**, with **over 100 vehicles daily** exceeding this speed.*

- **Repeat offenders are a significant issue: nearly 1,200 drivers were cited five or more times, and one individual amassed 60 citations in just five months.**

Why Other Measures Have Fallen Short

- **Physical road modifications** have been tested but found ineffective. Major infrastructure changes are prohibitively expensive and time-consuming.
- **Law enforcement staffing** is limited, leaving speed cameras as the **primary enforcement mechanism** on MD 210.

Clarifications About HB 349-25

1. **Does the bill impose additional fines for repeat offenders?**

- No, HB 349-25 does not add extra penalties for repeat violations.

2. **How are funds from citations used?**

- Revenue exceeding operational costs is legally directed to the **State Highway Administration (SHA)** to fund safety improvements on MD 210. Please refer to the attached HB 435 Ch 606 of 2023 - MD 210 Report (December 2024), for details.

3. **Are speed camera citations contestable?**

- Yes, citations include language informing violators of their right to contest the fine in court.

Conclusion

HB 349-25 offers a practical, life-saving solution to the chronic speeding problem on MD 210. By implementing tiered fines, Maryland can deter dangerous driving, protect residents, and prevent more families from enduring the pain of losing loved ones."

Thank you for your consideration and I respectfully ask that you vote IN FAVOR of HB-0349 and move it out of committee.

Sincerely,

/s/ Tamara Davis Brown

Member MD 210 Traffic Safety Committee