

Maryland Traffic Camera Enforcement Laws

Rental Company Transfer Notice — Legislative Summary & Policy Recommendation

Executive Summary

Maryland currently has **eight enacted automated traffic camera enforcement statutes**.

Only the **three** newer include a uniform **45-day pre-citation transfer notice procedure** protecting motor vehicle rental companies.

The remaining **five statutes provide either a complete exemption or no procedural protection at all**.

As the General Assembly considers changes in 2026 — including HB-1522 — I propose consistency across all camera programs.

I. Statutes That Include the 45-Day Rental Transfer Notice Procedure

The following statutes require law enforcement to provide a **45-day pre-citation transfer notice** to a motor vehicle rental company before issuing a citation.

This notice allows the rental company to transfer responsibility to the renter before a citation is issued.

1. § 21-706.1 — School Bus Monitoring Cameras

The original model statute.

Before issuing a citation to a rental company, the agency must first mail a 45-day notice allowing the company to:

1. Identify the driver by sworn statement
2. Report that the vehicle was stolen (with police report number)
3. Pay the penalty

If the rental company complies under options (1) or (2), **no citation may be issued**.

This language has existed since at least 2017.

2. § 21-1134 — Bus Lane Monitoring (Baltimore City)

Contains the identical 45-day pre-citation notice structure with the same three safe-harbor options.

3. § 21-707.1 — Stop Sign Monitoring (Prince George's County)

Enacted by Chapter 678, Acts of 2024 (HB 364).

Effective July 1, 2024.

Includes the full 45-day rental notice procedure, structured identically to § 21-706.1. *Applies only in Prince George's County and sunsets June 30, 2029*

II. Statutes That Do NOT Include the 45-Day Procedure

These statutes instead exclude rental/leasing companies from the definition of “Owner,” meaning rental companies **cannot be cited at all.**

Statute	System	Rental Treatment
§ 21-202.1	Red-light cameras	Rental/leasing companies excluded from “Owner” definition — complete exemption – HB-1522
§ 21-809	Speed monitoring systems	Rental/leasing companies excluded complete exemption – HB-1522
§ 21-810	Work zone speed control	Rental/leasing companies excluded — complete exemption
§ 21-704.1	Railroad grade crossing enforcement	Rental/leasing companies excluded — complete exemption
§ 24-111.3	Vehicle height monitoring (Baltimore County)	Rental companies excluded —

III. The Policy Gap

The 45-day procedural protection exists in **only 3 of 8 camera statutes.**

It is notably absent from the **two highest-volume systems:**

- Red-light cameras (§ 21-202.1)
- Speed cameras (§ 21-809)

HB-1522 would remove the current exemption for rental companies under these high-volume systems — but without adding the 45-day procedural safeguard.

That would create liability without due process protection

IV. Legislative Pattern

A clear pattern emerges:

- The older statutes (red-light, speed, work zone, railroad) predate the 45-day model.
- The newer statutes (school bus, bus lane, stop sign) incorporate the standardized 45-day notice procedure.

The legislature has already established a working, balanced model.

The issue is consistency.

V. What This Amendment Does

This amendment does **not create new law**.

It simply applies the existing 45-day procedure — already used in the three newer camera systems — to the remaining statutes, particularly red-light and speed cameras.

Proposed Uniform Rental Transfer Language

Before mailing a citation to a motor vehicle rental company liable under subsection (e) of this section, an agency shall mail a notice to the motor vehicle rental company stating that a citation will be mailed unless, within 45 **(or 60)** days after receiving the notice, the rental company provides:

1. A sworn statement stating the name and last known mailing address of the individual driving or renting the vehicle at the time of the violation;
2. A sworn statement that the vehicle or license plate was stolen at the time of the violation, along with the associated police report number; or
3. Payment of the penalty associated with the violation.

An agency may not issue a citation if the rental company complies with paragraph (1) or (2).

VI. Related 2026 Bills Using the Same Model Language

The General Assembly is already advancing additional camera programs that use this same rental transfer framework:

- SB-936 (Bus Lane Expansion)
- HB-1086 (Crosswalk Monitoring)
- HB-1113 (Bus Lane Expansion)

The policy direction is clear: when rental companies may be cited, the legislature provides a 45-day transfer safeguard.

Closing Message for Legislators

This issue is fundamentally about consistency, fairness, and proper allocation of responsibility.

Rental car companies do not have the authority to enforce traffic laws. They do not control how a customer drives once a vehicle leaves the lot. The responsibility for enforcing traffic laws — and holding drivers accountable for violations — properly rests with the government agency issuing the citation.

The cost of a traffic violation was never intended to be socialized across every renter in Maryland through increased rental rates or administrative fees. Violations should follow the driver who committed them.

Maryland has already established a balanced, workable model in the school bus, bus lane, and stop sign camera statutes. Those laws provide a clear transfer process that ensures accountability reaches the actual driver while protecting against improper liability.

The legislature has already built the model.

This amendment does not create new policy — it simply ensures uniform, consistent application of that existing model across all of Maryland's traffic camera systems.