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To: House Environment and Transportation Committee

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the House Environment and Transportation Committee to give a favorable report to HB1170 - Howard County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Expansion of Authorization Ho. Co. 9-26. This bill authorizes the placement and use of speed monitoring systems on highways in Howard County.

Speed monitoring systems, by nature, deter drivers from speeding. This includes underage drivers, law enforcement, and drivers in general. A recent traffic accident in Columbia, Maryland (which is of course in Howard County), led to the death of a young driver under eighteen years of age. Hopefully, using speed monitoring systems will minimize these sorts of accidents in future.

This bill will be of particular benefit to our blind constituents. Highways are dangerous for any pedestrians to cross, but especially so for blind pedestrians; we must rely on alternative techniques (such as listening to traffic) to determine when it is safe to cross. Some businesses are located on highways, and it would be unreasonable to expect blind patrons to not frequent them. However, since we are at the mercy of drivers

adhering to the law, which they often do not, we need an enforcement mechanism—we believe speed monitoring systems provide the necessary negative reinforcement.

A common concern speed-monitoring opponents have regards protection of privacy. We have already developed systems that protect privacy enough for monitoring red lights, tollways, and bus lanes. We could easily use similar systems for speed-monitoring as well.

For those reasons and others, we ask for a favorable report on HB1170. For questions, please contact me at President@nfbmd.org or at 443-426-4110.

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