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Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

Obvio Inc. supports HB 0938 which authorizes the use of crosswalk monitoring systems in school zones in Anne Arundel County. This legislation provides the County with a practical and effective tool to improve pedestrian safety where it matters most—around schools.

Maryland is facing a serious pedestrian safety crisis. In 2022, 132 pedestrians were killed on Maryland roadways, representing approximately 23 percent of all traffic fatalities statewide. These numbers reflect a persistent and unacceptable danger for families simply trying to walk safely in their communities.

Anne Arundel County is not immune to this challenge. Research and field observations show that crosswalk noncompliance is both widespread and severe. In a pilot observational study monitoring driver behavior at marked crosswalks across Anne Arundel County, drivers failed to yield to pedestrians nearly 8 out of 10 times when they should have. And some places were particularly egregious; at the crosswalks at West Street and Parole Street, and West Street across from the Michael E. Busch Library in Annapolis, drivers failed to yield 93% of the time.

Each failure to yield creates a near-miss moment, forcing pedestrians—including children, parents, and seniors—to either risk their safety or wait through multiple vehicles before crossing. This is especially concerning in school zones, where predictable driver behavior is essential and where the consequences of a single reckless decision can be catastrophic.

Other communities in Maryland such as Prince George's County have already demonstrated that automated enforcement changes behavior quickly and effectively. The County's stop sign safety program resulted in a 70 percent reduction in unsafe driving behavior within just four months through a combination of education and consistent enforcement. When drivers understand that traffic laws will be enforced reliably, they adjust their behavior. Crosswalk safety will be no different.

Obvio's technology is designed to help communities implement enforcement quickly and responsibly. Our solar-powered systems can be installed in days rather than months and are built to understand the full context of an intersection, including vehicle movements, pedestrian presence, distances, and safety risks.

Equally important, this technology is designed with strong privacy and transparency safeguards. Obvio does not use facial recognition, does not identify drivers or passengers, and does not track vehicles over time or across locations. The system captures information only when a potential traffic safety violation occurs, and license plate images are collected solely for purposes authorized by law.

All data is encrypted in transit and at rest and retained for only the period required for processing & adjudication. Data is securely and irreversibly deleted in compliance with HB 516 and applicable Transportation Article provisions. No citation is issued automatically; each potential violation is reviewed and approved by the designated municipal administrator before a ticket is issued.



HB 0938 is carefully structured and includes important guardrails. It limits use to school zones, requires authorization and public notice, caps the civil penalty at \$40, and makes clear that violations are not moving violations and do not result in points or insurance consequences. The legislation also prohibits contractors from being compensated on a per-ticket basis.

Automated crosswalk enforcement is one of the fastest and most cost-effective tools available to municipalities. While increased patrol staffing or major infrastructure redesigns can take years and require substantial funding, automated systems can be deployed quickly and begin improving behavior within weeks, at no net cost to the municipality.

For these reasons, Obvio respectfully urges this committee to support HB 0938. If you have any questions, please reach out to Dhruv Maheshwari at dhruv@obvio.ai

Thank you,

Wade Boarman