



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1522: Traffic Control Signal Monitoring and Speed Monitoring Systems

Testimony by Delegate Darrell Odom

March 12th, 2026

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

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of **House Bill 1522**. This legislation addresses a longstanding gap in Maryland's automated traffic enforcement laws by repealing the statutory exemption that currently shields rental and leasing companies from liability for violations captured by red light cameras and speed monitoring systems.

Under current Maryland law, rental and leasing companies are excluded from the statutory definition of "owner" for purposes of automated enforcement programs. As a result, when a vehicle involved in a violation is a rental vehicle, the citation often cannot be effectively enforced.

This loophole creates an inconsistency in the law and undermines the accountability that automated enforcement systems are designed to provide.

HB 1522 simply removes this exemption and treats rental and leased vehicles the same as all other vehicles when violations are captured by red light or speed cameras.

The bill does **not expand automated enforcement**, change speed thresholds, or increase penalties. It simply ensures that existing traffic safety laws apply consistently regardless of vehicle ownership.

Closing this loophole is important for public safety. Data provided by the Charles County Sheriff's Office illustrates the scope of the issue. In Charles County alone, automated enforcement systems recorded **over 1,200 violations committed by rental vehicles in 2025**. Violations included drivers traveling well above the posted speed limit in school zones, including instances of vehicles traveling **70 miles per hour or more**, with one driver recorded at **99 miles per hour in a 45 mph zone**.

These incidents highlight the safety risks that arise when drivers believe violations cannot be enforced.

Automated enforcement programs are intended to deter dangerous behavior and protect Marylanders, particularly in sensitive locations such as school zones and high-risk intersections. When a category of vehicles is effectively exempt from enforcement, it weakens deterrence and undermines the credibility of these programs.

Importantly, HB 1522 does not impose new burdens on rental companies. Rental companies that receive citations already have straightforward options available: they may identify the renter responsible for the violation or pay the citation and pass the cost to the renter as part of the rental agreement, which is a common practice in other automated enforcement contexts such as toll violations.

We also appreciate the **amendment submitted by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA)**. The amendment would extend the bill's provisions to include **work zone speed control systems**, ensuring consistency across Maryland's automated speed monitoring programs and supporting MDOT's Vision Zero and "Serious About Safety" initiatives.

We consider this amendment a **friendly amendment** that strengthens the bill's intent.

HB 1522 is a straightforward and common-sense reform that promotes fairness, strengthens enforcement of existing traffic safety laws, and ensures that all drivers—regardless of the vehicle they are operating—are held to the same standard of accountability.

For these reasons, we respectfully request a **favorable report on HB 1522**.

Thank you for your consideration.