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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 HB0601 - Montgomery County - Stop Sign Monitoring Systems Pilot Program - Gaithersburg and Rockville MC 5-26.

Stop signs are not in and of themselves sufficient to prevent traffic accidents. In fact, the Federal Highway Administration reports that 33 percent of traffic accidents occur at stop signs, and more than 40 percent of fatal accidents occur at stop signs. This data clearly highlights the need for monitoring systems. Even the presence of monitoring systems does not deter drivers from violating the rules of the road, with some cameras reporting thousands of violations per day.

Drivers' behavior is extremely unpredictable, and creates hazards and safety issues for pedestrians. Some drivers believe rolling stops are safe, but they are also considered traffic violations and can be among the most dangerous if someone crossing the street cannot anticipate when or if the vehicle will stop. Some drivers may come to a stop, but not before partially-obstructing the crosswalk, which is also dangerous and a traffic violation. Some drivers stop in the crosswalk, believing the existence of stopping justifies what is clearly a traffic violation.

Many of our blind and low vision members complain about how unsafe the roads are due to drivers' behavior. Blind people must use sound and alternative techniques to travel, which can be incredibly difficult if we don't know what to expect from drivers. Many of our members have reported drivers yelling at them to cross, which is dangerous if someone is trying to concentrate. Some drivers run over our members' white canes, scare their guide dogs, or otherwise disrupt concentration and safety. While monitoring systems will not stop this behavior, they will at least create records of it for negative reinforcement.

Moreover, individuals who receive citations for such violations are unlikely to repeat this behavior.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB0601. For questions, please contact me at [President@nfbmd.org](mailto:President@nfbmd.org) or at 443-426-4110.

**National Federation of the Blind of Maryland**

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