



HEARING DATE: March 4, 2026

BILL NO/TITLE: SB921: Traffic Control Signal Monitoring and Speed Monitoring Systems - Exemptions From Liability - Vehicle Rental Companies

COMMITTEE: Senate Judicial Proceedings

POSITION: **Oppose**

Maryland Motor Truck Association (MMTA) opposes SB921, which would repeal the exemption that protects rental and leasing companies from being held liable for automated traffic violations committed by the lessee/renter of a motor vehicle.

Automated enforcement systems are meant to deter unsafe driving, which only works if the citation reaches the driver of the vehicle who is breaking the rules. The passage of this legislation does nothing to promote safety – it simply attempts to generate revenue at the expense of rental companies by forcing them to either pay the citations or go through the expensive and time consuming process of transferring the liability.

Frequently it takes several weeks or months before a rental company receives a citation. Unlike leased vehicles, which typically are with the same customer for many years, rental vehicles terms are generally for short terms – often daily and certainly no more than 30 days. Tracking a customer down weeks or months later can be extremely cumbersome, leaving the rental vehicle company in the unenviable position of being forced to pay the citation or risk having its vehicle registration cancelled at renewal. The passage of this legislation will force rental companies to increase prices to cover the increased costs they will now be exposed to.

The owner of a vehicle is not responsible for the actions of a renter unless the customer negligently entrusted the vehicle to someone or the rental/leasing company negligently maintained the vehicle. Liability should follow the individual who committed the violation - not the company that does not control how the driver operates the vehicle while it is under his control.

For the reasons noted above, MMTA asks for an unfavorable report.

About Maryland Motor Truck Association: Maryland Motor Truck Association is a non-profit trade association that has represented the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 1,000 members, MMTA is committed to support, advocate and educate for a safe, efficient and profitable trucking industry in Maryland.

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