



February 10, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
The Honorable Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland General Assembly
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Smith and Vice Chair Waldstreicher:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups and insurance companies working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs, supports enactment of Senate Bill (SB) 487/House Bill (HB) 256. This legislation expands state and local use of speed safety cameras to roadway segments identified as safety corridors due to being high risk for vulnerable road users (VRUs). We urge you to take swift action to expand use of this proven, lifesaving technology to curb speeding and the deadly consequences.

In 2024, there were an overall estimated 579¹ traffic fatalities in Maryland, which is an 11 percent increase from 2015 to 2024.² Speeding is a major contributor to traffic fatalities as 30 percent of the fatalities in 2023 (187 lives lost) involved speeding and speeding related fatalities increased 40 percent from 2014 to 2023.³ The increase in fatalities for VRUs was even greater during the same period with fatalities among pedestrians rising 58 percent and among bicyclists and other cyclists by 200 percent.⁴ In addition, Maryland incurs approximately \$5.9 billion in economic harm annually due to motor vehicle crashes according to a 2019 analysis.⁵ This is equivalent to a “crash tax” of \$977 per resident each year.⁶ When updated for inflation alone, in 2025, costs would equate to approximately \$7.5 billion.⁷ Traffic safety is a serious and costly issue in urgent need of proven solutions.

Small increases in speed cause serious declines in safety. Crash tests show that speed upticks of even five to ten miles-per-hour (mph) greatly escalate a driver’s risk of injury or death.⁸ Speed increases also immensely impact pedestrians and other VRUs. The average risk of death for a pedestrian is 10 percent at an impact speed of 23 mph, 25 percent at 32 mph, and 50 percent at 42 mph.⁹ Further, drivers who speed have been shown to exhibit additional deadly driving behaviors; more than half (51 percent) of speeding passenger vehicle drivers in fatal crashes were unbuckled, compared to 23 percent of non-speeding drivers.¹⁰

Speed safety cameras are verified to deter speeding and its impact and are recommended for adoption by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), among others.¹¹ A study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found that speed safety cameras alone resulted in a 19 percent reduction in the likelihood that a crash caused a fatal or incapacitating injury.¹² Similarly, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) found that automated speed enforcement reduces fatalities and injuries by 20-37 percent and is particularly effective in school and construction zones.¹³ A study by Carnegie Mellon University of speed safety cameras in Philadelphia, PA found a 90 percent reduction in speeding and an approximately 50 percent decrease in crashes and injuries relative to the most similar arterials, all arterials and local roads in Philadelphia.¹⁴ Furthermore, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58) permits use of certain federal funds for automated enforcement programs in school and work zones.

Law enforcement risk their lives when performing their duties every day. Yet, it is implausible for law enforcement officers to be everywhere and catch every violation. Speed safety cameras augment traditional enforcement without requiring a traffic stop and will improve safety in safety corridors.

Advocates urges you to support SB 487/HB 256 to protect VRUs and others and save lives.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

cc: Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee members

- 1 Traffic Safety Facts: Crash Stats, Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities in 2024, NHTSA, April 2025, DOT HS 813 710, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813710>.
- 2 State Traffic Safety Information for Maryland, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm>.
- 3 State Traffic Safety Information for Maryland, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
- 4 State Traffic Safety Information for Maryland, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
- 5 The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019, NHTSA, Feb. 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.
- 6 The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019, NHTSA, Feb. 2023, DOT HS 813 403, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.
- 7 CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, Jan. 2019 to Jan. 2025, available at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.
- 8 Impact of Speeds on Drivers and Vehicles – Results from Crash Tests, AAA Foundation for Safety, Humanetics, and IIHS, Jan. 2021, available at <https://www.iihs.org/api/datastore/document/bibliography/2218>.
- 9 Impact Speed and a Pedestrian’s Risk of Severe Injury or Death, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Sep. 2011., available at <https://aaaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2011PedestrianRiskVsSpeedReport.pdf>.
- 10 Traffic Safety Facts 2021 Data: Speeding, NHTSA, Jul. 2023, DOT HS 813 473, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813473>.
- 11 Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles, NTSB, July 2017, SS-17-01, available at <https://www.ntsb.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf>.
- 12 Effects of Automated Speed Enforcement in Montgomery County Maryland on Vehicle Speeds, Public Opinion and Crashes, IIHS; available at <https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2097>.
- 13 Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide, Federal Highway Administration, January 2023, available at [Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide](#).
- 14 Evaluating the Effectiveness of Urban Speed Cameras on Traffic Safety in a Period of Dramatic Change, Carnegie Mellon University, July 2024, available at https://ppms.cit.cmu.edu/media/project_files/Guerra_Erick_420.pdf.