

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2025 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader

House Bill 988 (Montgomery County Delegation)
Environment and Transportation

Judicial Proceedings

Montgomery County - Speed Monitoring Systems - Maryland Route 200
(Intercounty Connector)
MC 10-25

This bill authorizes the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) to place and use speed monitoring systems (speed cameras) on Maryland Route 200 (Intercounty Connector (ICC)) in Montgomery County. The State Highway Administration (SHA) must provide MDTA with access to its existing speed monitoring systems and vendor contracts to assist MDTA in planning and implementing its own speed cameras. All civil penalties resulting from citations issued from these cameras must be paid to the District Court, and the District Court must remit the penalty revenue to MDTA. The bill also makes a series of technical and conforming changes, many of which simply clarify the flow of revenues from all automated enforcement systems used in the State and ensure the continuation of relevant provisions when other Acts that previously authorized the use of automated enforcement systems terminate. However, the bill also requires *all* revenues derived from certain State-operated automated enforcement systems to initially be paid directly to the District Court.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: General fund expenditures for the Judiciary increase by \$277,800 in FY 2026 for one-time programming costs. To the extent that speed cameras are placed along the ICC in Montgomery County, nonbudgeted revenues and expenditures for MDTA increase, potentially significantly, beginning as early as FY 2026; revenues are anticipated to fully offset any administrative program costs incurred by MDTA. Any additional caseload for the District Court can be handled using existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary:

Speed Cameras on the Intercounty Connector in Montgomery County

The bill incorporates the authorization for MDTA to place and use speed cameras within current statutory provisions governing the usage of speed cameras in specified locations throughout the State. Notably and consistent with the requirements governing most other speed cameras used in the State:

- before activating a speed camera, MDTA must take specified steps to notify the general public of the placement of the speed camera;
- MDTA must ensure there is specified signage notifying motorists that a speed camera is in use;
- MDTA must report on its usage of speed cameras in the same manner as local jurisdictions do to the Maryland Police Training and Standards Commission; and
- the maximum civil penalty for a violation recorded from a speed camera placed on the ICC by MDTA is \$40.

Collection of Automated Enforcement System Revenues

The bill requires *all* penalty revenues from State-operated traffic control signal monitoring systems, work zone speed control systems, speed monitoring systems, and bus lane monitoring systems to be paid directly to the District Court (instead of only penalty revenues derived from these systems in *contested* cases).

Current Law:

Maryland Transportation Authority and State Highway Administration

Since 1971, MDTA has been responsible for constructing, managing, operating, and improving the State's toll facilities (for example, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial/Senator Thomas "Mac" Middleton Bridge) and for financing new revenue-producing transportation projects. MDTA is a nonbudgeted State agency, meaning that its budget is not subject to the General Assembly's appropriation process.

SHA is responsible for more than 5,200 miles or approximately 16,800 lane miles of road, 2,500 bridges, 3,500 small stream crossing structures, and 80 miles of sound/noise barriers in the State, including Maryland Route 210. It also has responsibility for planning,

designing, constructing, and maintaining these roads and bridges to safety and performance standards while considering sociological, ecological, and economic concerns. SHA must construct, reconstruct, and repair State highways as necessary and maintain them in good condition.

Speed Monitoring Systems – Generally

State law authorizes the use of various automated monitoring systems, including traffic control system monitoring systems, speed monitoring systems, school bus monitoring systems, vehicle height monitoring systems, and work zone speed control systems.

Speed monitoring systems must be authorized in a local jurisdiction by the governing body of the jurisdiction (but only after reasonable notice and a public hearing). Before activating a speed monitoring system, a local jurisdiction must publish notice of the location of the speed monitoring system on its website and in a newspaper of general circulation in the jurisdiction. In addition, the jurisdiction must also ensure that each sign that designates a school zone is proximate to a sign that (1) indicates that speed monitoring systems are in use in the school zone and (2) conforms with specified traffic control device standards adopted by SHA. Similar requirements apply to speed cameras established on Maryland Route 210 (Indian Head Highway), grounds of institutions of higher education in Prince George's County, Interstate 83 in Baltimore City, Maryland Route 175 in Anne Arundel County (Jessup Road) between the Maryland Route 175/295 interchange and the Anne Arundel County-Howard County line, and at the intersection of Maryland Route 333 (Oxford Road) and Bonfield Avenue in Talbot County.

In Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties only, speed monitoring systems may be used on a highway in a residential district with a maximum posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. The aforementioned signage requirements do not apply to these speed cameras.

Speed Monitoring Systems – Citations and Fines

Unless the driver of the motor vehicle received a citation from a police officer at the time of the violation, the owner or the driver of a motor vehicle is subject to a civil penalty if the motor vehicle is recorded by a speed monitoring system while exceeding the posted speed limit. The authorized agency (*e.g.*, a local law enforcement agency) must mail a citation to the owner that includes specified information, including a copy of the recorded image, the location where the violation occurred, and the amount of the civil penalty imposed and the date by which the civil penalty should be paid. A person who receives a citation may:

- pay the civil penalty, in accordance with the instructions on the citation, directly to the political subdivision; or
- elect to stand trial in the District Court for the alleged violation.

The civil penalty may not exceed \$40, and the District Court must prescribe:

- a uniform citation form that includes specified information and allows the person receiving the citation to pay the citation or contest the citation by standing trial, as specified; and
- a civil penalty, which must be indicated on the citation, to be paid by persons who choose to prepay the civil penalty without appearing in District Court.

With specified exceptions, penalty revenues from automated enforcement systems, including speed monitoring systems, must be paid (1) to the relevant political subdivision, in an uncontested case and (2) directly to the District Court (and consequently the general fund) in a case that is contested in District Court.

Generally, from the fines generated by a speed monitoring system, the relevant jurisdiction may recover the costs of implementing the system and may spend any remaining balance solely for public safety purposes, including for pedestrian safety programs. However, if the balance of revenues after cost recovery for any fiscal year is greater than 10% of the jurisdiction's total revenues, the excess must be remitted to the Comptroller.

State Fiscal Effect:

District Court and Penalty Revenues from State-operated Systems

As noted above, the bill requires all penalty revenues from specified State-operated automated enforcement systems to be paid to the District Court; however, under current law, only penalty revenues from contested cases are paid to the District Court. To accommodate this change and ensure its cashing systems are capable of collecting and accounting for revenues from prepaid citations, the District Court must upgrade its systems at an estimated cost of \$277,768 in fiscal 2026 only.

While all civil penalties resulting from citations newly issued under the bill are collected by the District Court, they are subsequently remitted to MDTA. This analysis assumes that, although under the bill, all civil penalties from other State-operated automated enforcement systems are also initially paid directly to the District Court, the District Court remits the penalty revenues as otherwise prescribed under statute, resulting in no general fund or special fund impact from that requirement.

Any increase in District Court caseloads from new speed cameras on the ICC in Montgomery County can likely be handled with existing resources.

Maryland Transportation Authority

MDTA advises that, under the bill, it is considering placing two speed cameras on the ICC within Montgomery County; MDTA anticipates administrative costs for the speed camera program to total about \$1.5 million annually.

As the bill requires *all* ICC citation revenues to be remitted to MDTA, if these cameras are installed, nonbudgeted revenues are anticipated to increase significantly. The exact number of citations that may be issued once the speed camera program is implemented depends on several factors, including the volume of traffic at each camera location and any deterrent effect the cameras may have. Nevertheless, the Department of Legislative Services advises that the number of citations issued under the bill may be significant.

Based on program data from work zone speed control systems, which are managed by SHA, revenues received from a speed monitoring system authorization on the ICC may likewise be significant. In fiscal 2024, the Work Zone Safety Program issued 367,388 citations and collected \$12.8 million in penalty revenues. Thus, reflective of these citation levels, the fine revenues for ICC speed camera citations are likely to be more than sufficient to cover MDTA's anticipated costs noted above.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has been introduced within the last three years. See HB 1369 of 2024.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Comptroller's Office; Judiciary (Administrative Office of the Courts); Department of State Police; Montgomery County; Department of Legislative Services

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