



TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

**HOUSE BILL 226 -- BALTIMORE CITY - COMPLETE STREETS PROGRAM FUNDING --
TRAFFIC AND VEHICLE MONITORING SYSTEMS**

Sponsor: Delegate R. Lewis

March 11, 2021

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO**

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

Position: Support

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports House Bill 226. The bill authorizes Baltimore City to use any fines collected by Baltimore City as a result of violations from specified automated enforcement systems to be used to administer the systems and requires any remaining funds to be used for public safety or transportation infrastructure improvements consistent with the purpose and goals of the State Complete Streets Program and the city's Complete Streets Transportation System.

According to the National Complete Streets Coalition, more than 1,600 complete streets policies have been passed in the United States. Baltimore City joined that list in 2018 with the passage of the Complete Streets Ordinance. Complete Streets laws and policies are intended to ensure that the public rights-of-way are designed to safely and efficiently accommodate all users of the transportation network, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, drivers, and those who travel via scooter or other new mobility options. Baltimore City's ordinance was particularly strong in the area of equity and in ensuring that projects are designed and prioritized through an equity lens. This is of particular significance in Baltimore City, where approximately 30 percent of households do not have a car and rely on other means of transportation to access education, training, and jobs.

By design, automated transportation enforcement (ATE) systems are intended to enhance public safety by automatically issuing citations to individuals who violate certain traffic laws, such as spending or running a red light. Research indicates that ATE systems, when implemented appropriately, are effective behavior modification tools in that they reduce traffic safety violations in the areas that they are operational. Because complete streets laws and policies are also designed to improve the safety of the traveling public, the policy proposal to designate ATE revenues to support the implementation of complete streets is sound.

This bill is consistent with a key tenet in *Gaining the Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, a report published by the GBC that identifies eight core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth:

Superior transportation infrastructure with reliable funding mechanisms. An essential prerequisite of a competitive business environment includes well-funded and maintained highway, transit, port, and airport infrastructure that provides reliable and efficient options to move people, goods and services.

Finally, House Bill 226 is consistent with the Greater Baltimore Committee's 2021 Legislative Priorities, which advocate for policymakers to implement a balanced transportation policy and funding priorities that create interconnected, multimodal transportation networks and promote equitable investment in systems across regions, modes, and communities.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report with amendments on House Bill 226.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 66-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

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