

Melissas Schweisguth

Hyattsville, MD 20782

6 February 2024

Dear Committee Chair and Members,

Thank you for your work and for considering public input on FY24 legislation. I am a resident of Prince George's County and am writing in support of HB0364, which proposes automated camera enforcement of traffic control signs such as stop signs in Prince George's County. Delegate Healey previously proposed this measure as a State bill because many constituents have complained about stop sign running and other similar traffic violations, and both residents and municipalities have asked to legalize cameras for traffic signals such as stop signs. There is clearly demand and support for this measure in Prince George's county.

When I am out running, cycling, walking and driving in Prince George's County, I repeatedly see drivers treat stop signs like yield signs, rolling through them. On several occasions drivers rolled through a stop sign while I was in the crosswalk, resulting in a scary near miss. Drivers also run through the red light cycle of a pedestrian activated signal on MD 500 at Jamestown Road and the NW Branch Trail, a busy crossing between the West Hyattsville metro station and multiple apartments. Unsafe driving is a continued problem and Prince George's county has the highest traffic fatalities in the State. We need better enforcement to reach Vision Zero and protect our most vulnerable road users, including children, the elderly, those with visual or mobility impairments, cyclists, etc. We need more tools besides the currently allowed speed and red light cameras to ensure safety in all areas (e.g., residential, business, school, etc.) for all road users. Cameras on traffic control devices such as stop signs, crosswalks and more will provide a critical tool to save lives.

Automated enforcement is more efficient than the current system whereby police sit and wait for people to run a stop sign, etc. Automated enforcement also removes the risk of traffic stops becoming deadly,, reversing an unfortunate trend in our country that has disproportionately affected people of color

Prince George's county is ready for expanded automated enforcement as DC has stop sign cameras, so many drivers in the county are familiar with them. Harmonizing traffic enforcement approaches across the DC metro area makes sense. DC's cameras also indicate the high rate of failure to stop at stop signs. From Jan-Sept 2022, DC's eight stop sign cameras recorded 120,000 violations, more than 1,650 violations per camera per month.

Fair and efficient enforcement makes our roads safer for all - pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers. Please support HB0364 to meet continued demand for such measures, and the safer streets they create.

Thank you,

Melissa A Schweisguth