



MC 15-24 – Montgomery County – Speed Monitoring Systems – High-Risk
Highways
Washington Area Bicyclist Association – FAVORABLE

December 4, 2023

Chairs Kramer and Palakovich Carr and Members of the Montgomery County Delegation,

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), an advocacy organization with 1,200 Maryland members, supports bill MC 15-24.

MC 15-24 would require that the balance of automated speed monitoring system fines collected in Montgomery County be used to fund the study, design, and construction of safety-related projects on roadways or intersections in Montgomery County that have been identified as high risk for motor vehicle collisions that result in serious bodily injury or death.

Automated speed monitoring systems are a safety tool, typically placed in locations with significant non-compliance. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), "Studies clearly show that higher speeds result in greater impact at the time of a crash, which leads to more severe injuries and fatalities." We need to appropriately reduce speeds on our roadways via safety redesign and by speed-limit enforcement that encourages driver compliance with speed limits. Automated speed monitoring systems are an effective tool toward this end.

It is entirely appropriate that the balance of enforcement fines be targeted to enhance safety at our county's most dangerous roadway locations, as identified by the resources cited in bill MC 15-24.

I will note one point about the bill's wording. The bill uses the word "accidents" rather than "crashes." That legislative usage is appropriate because Maryland Code's Transportation Article, including § 20-101 to § 20-113 regarding vehicle laws, consistently uses "accident." But an accident is "an event that takes place without one's foresight or expectation; an undesigned, sudden, and unexpected event." Roadway collisions are sadly and completely predictable, the result of deficient design and safety measures and of improper vehicle operation. We foresee and expect them because our roads are unsafe and drivers are too-often negligent, so collisions are not truly accidents. This said, MC 15-24's text must be consistent with Maryland code despite code's outmoded wording.

WABA recommends you advance MC 15-24 and work in Annapolis in the coming months to enact this legislation with the suggested wording substitution.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

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