

TESTIMONY RE: HOUSE BILL NO. 5210 (RAISED) AN ACT CONCERNING
ENFORCEMENT OF SPEEDING AND TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL VIOLATIONS

Judiciary Committee Hearing

February 27, 2006

Good Afternoon Senator McDonald, Senator Handley, Senator Kissel, Representative Lawlor, Representative Spallone and Representative Farr, and members of the Judiciary Committee. My name is Debbie Walker and I work for Nestor Traffic Systems, a provider of automated safety solutions. I am a former law enforcement officer in Colchester, Vermont and a former Director of Highway Safety for the State of Vermont. I am here today to testify in support of HOUSE BILL NO. 5210 AN ACT CONCERNING ENFORCEMENT OF SPEEDING AND TRAFFIC CONTROL SIGNAL VIOLATIONS.

As a former public official and now as a provider of automated traffic safety solutions, I have seen the dramatic positive effects of this technology. There are 23 states, representing more than 110 communities, joining the trend that currently allows for the utilization of automated enforcement devices. Automated traffic enforcement technology is now being used in 35 municipalities in North America. There are dramatic statistics and reports that show that these safety programs, when implemented, do show dramatic reductions in red light violations. The statistics range between 40% to 60% reductions in most of the cities surveyed. Automated traffic enforcement devices are another tool for State and local law enforcement personnel to use to educate and curb driver behavior with the penultimate goal of saving lives. I applaud the committee for including language requiring advanced notification for 30 days prior to the issuance of the citation, which is the first step toward changing driving behavior.

I would like to explain how the automated traffic enforcement devices work. For speed enforcement, the system uses conventional laser technology to measure vehicle speeds. Scanning the road surface and taking 100 measurements each second, the system

monitors multiple lanes simultaneously. The Police Department will use this tool to consistently enforce and monitor speeds in targeted areas with known problems, such as school and work zones. A Police Officer will observe and approve all speed violations in compliance with all state requirements under existing motor vehicle codes.

With respect to red light cameras, the system uses multiple cameras placed at the intersection to record video evidence of the red light runners. Using video imaging and time/distance calculations, the system predicts that a vehicle will run a red light and then activates video and digital cameras. These cameras capture evidence of the rear of the vehicle, the license plate, and a video showing the vehicle behind the stop line while the light is red and then proceeding through the intersection while the light is still red.

Automated enforcement works. The goal of the program is to increase roadway safety and reduce the number of accidents by drivers who disobey traffic laws. This goal can be accomplished by consistent enforcement and through public awareness and education.

I strongly encourage members to pass the legislation and would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have.