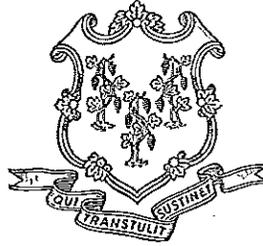


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February 25, 2013

Senate Co-Chair Andrew Maynard
House Co-Chair Antonio Guerrero
Transportation Committee
300 Capitol Avenue
Hartford, CT 06106

Dear Chairs, Ranking Members and Members of the Transportation Committee:

Testimony in Support of: SB-634, AN ACT ALLOWING MUNICIPALITIES TO OPERATE AUTOMATED TRAFFIC ENFORCEMENT SAFETY DEVICES AT INTERSECTIONS.

Good morning. I want to thank Co-Chairs Maynard and Guerrero, Ranking Members Boucher and Scribner, as well as distinguished members of the Transportation Committee for the opportunity to testify on behalf of Senate Bill 634, An Act Allowing Municipalities To Operate Automated Traffic Enforcement Safety Devices At Intersections.

How Automated Road Safety Camera Systems Work

Road safety cameras operate using a combination of cameras and triggers in order to collect evidence authorities need to prosecute light-running vehicles. Typically, cameras are positioned at the corners of an intersection in order to photograph cars driving through. There are a number of technologies available in terms of triggering the photograph but all serve the purpose of detecting when a car has moved past a particular point in the street.

This technology supplements the great work already underway by law enforcement officials. Therefore, it functions in a manner consistent with traditional enforcement methods, and those vehicles still in an intersection when a yellow light turns red are not considered in violation. The vehicle must enter the intersection *after* the light turns red to be considered a violation.

When a camera captures a violation at a particular intersection, it is reviewed in concert with a set of criteria outlined by the municipality. (For instance, if a vehicle proceeds through a red light in order to allow an ambulance to pass or as part of a funeral procession, a municipality may disregard the evidence as it does not constitute a violation of local laws.) The evidence of a violation is sent to the city or town and must be sworn to or affirmed by a law enforcement employee authorized to issue citations. If the law enforcement employee finds, based on the video and images, that a violation occurred, a citation is issued.

Public Safety Benefits

This legislation would allow for a significant public safety benefit for the communities of Connecticut. According to the United States Department of Transportation, there are 92,000 red light running crashes annually.

As law enforcement and city governments look for ways to reduce these tragic numbers, we believe safety cameras programs can play a major role – and they are across the country.

An independent study conducted by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) and released earlier this year found tremendous public safety benefits result from red light safety camera systems. Specifically, the 14 largest cities in the country using cameras experienced a 24 percent reduction in fatal crash rates from 2004-2008 at intersections using cameras. The same study showed significant reductions in the number of red light running fatalities at intersections not using cameras because of the halo effect they have.

These numbers are consistent with data we have seen from across the country. For example, after implementing red light safety cameras, the city of New Orleans boasted an 85% drop in red light running in 2009, while cameras led to a 90% reduction in red light running crashes in Council Bluffs, Iowa (Iowa State University, 2007).

Thank you very much for the opportunity to testify before the Transportation Committee – I respectfully request that the Committee pass this legislation this year.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary LeBeau". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "L".

Gary LeBeau
State Senator, 3rd District