

# SAFETY FOCUS

Published by The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running



**THE NATIONAL  
CAMPAIGN TO STOP  
RED LIGHT RUNNING  
ADVISORY BOARD**

**Barbara Harsha**

Executive Director  
Governors Highway Safety Association

**Brian O'Neill**

Former President  
Insurance Institute for Highway Safety

**Judith Lee Stone**

President and Executive Director  
Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety

**Harry Teter**

President, American Trauma Society

**Anthony Kane, Ph.D.**

Director of Engineering and Technical Services  
Am. Assoc. of State Highway and  
Transportation Officials (AASHTO)

**Ann Sweet**

Founder, Focus on Safety

**Bill Wilkinson**

Executive Director  
National Center for Bicycling and Walking

**Bryan Porter, Ph.D.**

Associate Professor of Psychology  
Old Dominion University

**Ricardo Martinez, M.D.**

Clinical Professor of Emergency Medicine at  
Emory University  
Former Administrator of the  
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration

**Allen Fields**

Retired Chief Justice  
Republic of the Marshall Islands

**John McGinness**

Sheriff  
Sacramento County, CA

**Terry Gainer**

Sergeant-At-Arms  
U.S. Senate

**Earl Sweeney**

Assistant Commissioner  
New Hampshire Dept. of Public Safety

**Peter Harkness**

Editor and Publisher  
*Governing Magazine*

**John Ulczycki**

National Safety Council

**Andy Clarke**

Executive Director  
League of American Bicyclists

Volume Seven, No. 2

February 2008

*This issue features two new speed camera studies by the IIHS, an editorial commentary penned by 5 Missouri police chiefs, a new DVD on the effects of red light running, court rulings concerning camera programs, governors' legislative requests for camera programs and a legislative update.*

**Two new IIHS studies confirm speed camera benefits**

## Photo Enforcement Puts the Brakes on Speeders in Residential Areas *and* Highways

Two new studies show that speed camera programs in Maryland and Arizona led to dramatic decreases in the number of speeding vehicles.

The reports, issued January 31<sup>st</sup> by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), evaluated the use of speed cameras in residential areas and school zones in Montgomery County, Maryland, and on Loop 101, an urban freeway in Scottsdale, Arizona.

“Across the country, cities are using technology to help over-burdened police departments enforce laws against speeding and red light running,” said Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey. “Excessive speeding is a significant problem everywhere and consistent enforcement is key to modifying driver behavior as these reports prove.”

The study of Montgomery County's *Safe Speed* program to enforce speed limits of 35 mph or less in residential areas and school zones found that vehicles going more than 10 mph faster than posted speed limits dropped 70 percent where cameras were in use and 39 percent on roads with signs warning of enforcement but where cameras weren't yet in place.

A survey taken six months after the photo enforcement program began found that 74 percent of Montgomery County respondents considered speeding a problem on residential streets, 60 percent were aware of camera enforcement, and 62 percent favored it. The program was Maryland's first automated speed enforcement program.



*(continued on page 2)*

## Two new IIHS studies confirm speed camera benefits

(continued from page 1)

The Arizona study found that before the city of Scottsdale, Arizona, began a 9-month pilot speed camera enforcement program in 2006, 15 percent of drivers were traveling faster than 75 mph on sections of Loop 101, a busy urban freeway with a 65 mph posted limit.

Once the cameras were in place, the number of violators plunged to 1-2 percent. Plus, speed violations fell on the same freeway 25 miles outside of the enforcement area. The Loop 101 project marked the first use of fixed speed cameras on a major U.S. highway.

As noted in the IIHS research report, “Deployment of six cameras along an 8-mile corridor was associated with large declines in mean speeds and an 88 percent decrease in the odds of vehicles traveling 11 mph or more above the 65 mph limit. Traffic speeds increased soon after the pilot program was suspended.” (Speed-camera enforcement was reinstated in February 2007).

“Our studies found dramatic reductions in speeding,” said Anne McCartt, IIHS senior vice president for research. “Camera enforcement had a positive effect on driver behavior and our surveys indicate that speed cameras garnered the support of local drivers.”

According to the IIHS *Status Report, Special Issue: Speed*, “By comparing Loop 101 speeds with speeds on nearby freeways that didn’t have cameras, researchers concluded that the Scottsdale program was associated with as much as a 95 percent decrease in the odds that drivers would surpass 75 mph. Previous studies in Europe and Australia, where speed cameras are widely used, have reported 50-60 percent reductions in the proportions of vehicles exceeding speed limits by more than 9 mph.”

The Institute, based in Arlington, Virginia, is a nonprofit highway safety research group funded by auto insurers with the goal of reducing deaths, injuries, and property damage in motor vehicle crashes.

For a copy of “Evaluation of automated speed enforcement in Montgomery County, Maryland” by R. Retting et al., or for a copy of “Evaluation of automated speed enforcement on Loop 101 freeway in Scottsdale, Arizona” by R. Retting et al., go to the Campaign’s website at [www.stopredlightrunning.com](http://www.stopredlightrunning.com). Or visit the IIHS website at [www.iihs.org](http://www.iihs.org).

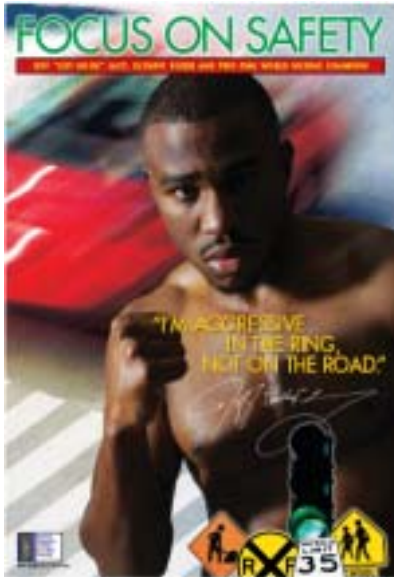
## Ohio Supreme Court Upholds Cities’ Right to Use Speed Cameras

In a much anticipated ruling, the Ohio Supreme Court ruled Jan. 31 that Ohio municipalities have the right under “home rule” to implement photo enforcement programs that impose civil penalties for traffic violations.

A number of Akron-area motorists had challenged citations they received when speed cameras photographed their vehicles speeding in a school zone. The motorists argued that Akron’s camera program, which uses civil penalties, conflicted with state laws defining speeding and traffic-light violations as criminal offenses.

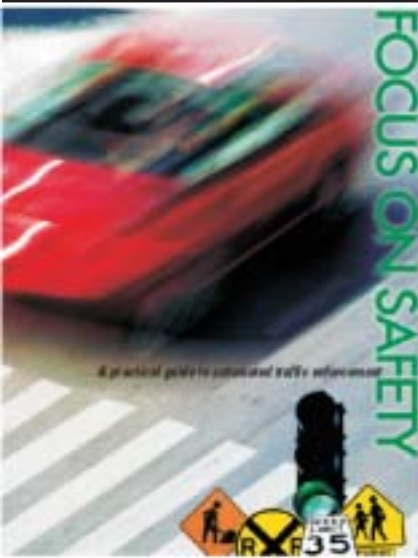
The court noted that use of the cameras to issue civil citations to an offending vehicle’s owner had also raised questions regarding an individual’s constitutional rights. Those questions are before a federal court, which had asked the Ohio Supreme Court to first review whether cities could use traffic cameras under their home rule powers. Cameras are used in several Ohio cities, including Akron, Cleveland, Columbus, and Toledo.

See page 7 for another recent court decision.



Order our **latest poster** of Jeff "Left Hook" Lacy, a former Olympic boxer and IBF Super Middleweight champion. To request a poster, please contact the Campaign at 202-828-9100 or by email at [info@stopredlightrunning.com](mailto:info@stopredlightrunning.com).

Include your name, email, mailing address and how many you would like. The posters are free, but we ask that those requesting posters pay the shipping charges, which are minimal.



**Focus on Safety: A practical guide to automated traffic enforcement**, is a new guide to automated photo enforcement. It is a comprehensive resource to help state legislators and local policymakers, law enforcement officers, highway safety advocates and community groups design, operate, and support effective photo enforcement programs.

The guide is available from the Campaign for \$9 a copy, or it can be downloaded in PDF format from the Campaign website at [www.stopredlightrunning.com](http://www.stopredlightrunning.com).

## ORDER YOUR FREE CAMPAIGN BUMPER STICKERS

To order an I STOP ON RED bumper sticker, send your name, address and how many bumper stickers you want via email to: [info@stopredlightrunning.com](mailto:info@stopredlightrunning.com) or call us at 202-828-9100. Make sure and join the Campaign by sending your name, address, email, and telephone information. That's free, too!

## New DVD on the Effects of Red Light Running

A new DVD, Stop Red Light Running, was produced in January for the Stop! Red Light Running Coalition of Florida ([www.floridastopsonred.org](http://www.floridastopsonred.org)). The DVD, produced by the Center for Faith and Freedom, shows the impact of red light running and prominently features Coalition President Melissa Wandall, whose husband was killed by a red light runner in 2003.

**The Story Behind the DVD.** Melissa said that after she wrote an editorial for The Herald Tribune, Stuart Roth from the Center for Faith and Freedom approached her and "said he wanted to produce a video on the affects of red light running and why the Mark Wandall Safety Act is just that — a safety act. His team did a phenomenal job!"

You can view the video by going to [www.faithandfreedom.org](http://www.faithandfreedom.org) and clicking on the traffic signal.

See page 5 for an update on the Mark Wandall Safety Act.



# The real costs and benefits of red-light cameras

*This commentary, written in response to an editorial, ran in the 1/15/08 edition of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch. The authors are the chiefs of police of the municipalities of Arnold (Bob Shockey), Beverly Hills (Joe Collins), Florissant (William Karabas), Hazelwood (Carl Wolf) and St. John (Terry Milam). Reprinted with permission of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch, copyright 2008.*

**A**lthough red-light cameras are relatively recent additions to our departments' safety tools, they have been used in other jurisdictions for years. One reason for the delay in their use in our area is the relatively high cost of installing, maintaining and operating them. They have been installed now because the costs are being covered by fines collected from people who run red lights — not from innocent taxpayers.

Without this revenue mechanism, only the most affluent local communities would be able to afford these safety devices without a tax increase or a reduction in other services.

Red-light cameras are operating at many of the region's most dangerous intersections, and they work. In our cities, the number of recorded red-light violations has dropped since the cameras were installed, and the number of accidents — head-on, rear-end and every other combination of collision — has fallen.

In Arnold, collisions at our worst intersection have dropped more than 30 percent. In Florissant, we have seen a 64 percent reduction in violations at the first monitored intersection and 51 percent at the others. In Hazelwood, we have recorded a 46 percent reduction in collisions at monitored intersections. Beverly Hills has seen a reduction of 76 percent in violations; in St. John, 62 percent.

And even though the installations of red-light cameras in St. Louis, Creve Coeur and other municipalities are more recent, they, too, appear to be experiencing a drop in violations. There is no other method of traffic patrol that is safer, more efficient and more effective in reducing red-light violations.

A recent Post-Dispatch editorial that criticized the use of this tool expressed indignation at, among other things, the fact that "the camera doesn't care who is operating the car." Actually, we see this as a positive aspect of the program.

The cameras are objective: The violation is based on a digital image of the car and license plate in a specific intersection. There is no weighing of conflicting testimony between an alleged perpetrator and a police officer. And there is no possibility of racial or gender bias because the cameras do not record faces.

Nor are we upset that fines for violating a red light are more expensive than parking tickets. These kinds of violations lead to collisions, and collisions lead to injuries and fatalities. We know of no one being killed as a result of a car parked too long at a meter.

As to possible action by the Missouri Legislature requiring that warning signs be posted at monitored intersections, that already is the case at every camera-monitored intersection in our areas. Our municipal officials required signs to be prominently posted and included language to that effect in the ordinances authorizing the cameras' deployment. The supplier from which we obtained the system also recommended them.

It is important to note that state engineers, not local officials, set and verify the timing of the amber (yellow) lights at most of the intersections at which cameras have been installed. And in all of our municipalities, the ultimate decision to issue a violation notice is made by a commissioned police officer who reviews the digital evidence.

The editorial suggested that if safety were the only reason for the use of these cameras, our departments should be willing to forgo the fines generated by the cameras and redirect the revenue to school districts. This would eliminate the funds necessary to pay for the cost of operating red-light camera programs, including police review of the digital images and the subsequent administration by the courts.

The practical result of redirecting revenue to school districts would be to kill red-light camera programs almost everywhere in Missouri, including those near schools. If that was the editorial's hope, it should have just said so.

# Legislative Update — February 2008

If there is legislation pending in your state that is not listed here, please contact the Campaign at (202)828-9100 or [info@stopredlightrunning.com](mailto:info@stopredlightrunning.com).

## **RED LIGHT RUNNING SAFETY CAMERAS**

**ALABAMA:** HB 24 (Bentley), introduced 2/05/08, is a re-filing of the Alabama Class 4 Municipality Red Light Safety Act; would give Tuscaloosa and Gadsden the authority to install red light cameras. Referred to the county and municipal government committee.

**FLORIDA:** SB 806 (Bennett) and HB 351 (Reagan), dubbed the Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act, would allow local governments to establish red light camera programs and impose a \$125 fine against the owner of the vehicles photographed running the red light. SB 806 was filed 12/14/07. HB 351 was filed 12/07/07 and was referred to the Economic Expansion & Infrastructure Council 01/03/08. SB 806 was referred to Transportation; Criminal Justice; Community Affairs; Transportation and Economic Development Appropriations 1/24/08.

**ILLINOIS:** HB 4562 (Brady) would allow the implementation of red light camera programs in DeKalb, McLean, Kankakee, LaSalle, Peoria, Sangamon, Vermilion and Winnebago counties (currently the only counties that can use the technology are in the Chicago and St. Louis areas). Introduced 1/18/08 and referred to the rules committee.

**MINNESOTA:** HF 1058 (Thissen, et al) and a companion Senate bill, SF 1071 (Dibble, Higgins, Murphy, Larson, Rest) would authorize local communities to operate red light camera programs. HF 1058 was introduced 2/15/07 and referred to Public Safety and Civil Justice committee 03/21/07. SF 1071 (Dibble, Higgins, Murphy, Larson, Rest) was introduced 02/21/07 and referred to the judiciary committee 03/14/07.

**MISSISSIPPI:** HB 1197(Duvall), would prohibit any county or municipality from enacting or enforcing ordinances allowing red light or speed cameras, effective 7/1/08. Introduced 2/4/08 and referred to the transportation committee.

**MISSOURI:** HB1376 (Portwood) establishes the Missouri Universal Red Light Enforcement Act; would require all photo enforcement systems to register with the Missouri Department Transportation and all participating cities to pay a \$500 fee to the Red Light Enforcement Fund for conducting audits to ensure entity compliance with the provisions of the bill. The combined fine and court costs cannot exceed \$100. The bill also prohibits the use of speed cameras. Pre-filed 12/07/07, introduced in the House 01/09/08; second reading 01/10/08.

**NEW JERSEY:** A 4314 (Wisniewski, Stack) would reverse the state's ban on photo enforcement and establish a five-year pilot program allowing local governments to install red light cameras. Bill was substituted for identical Senate bill S2123 (Coniglio). Passed the Assembly and the Senate 01/07/08. Signed by the governor 01/13/08.

*(continued on page 6)*

## Legislative update

(continued from page 5)

**NEW MEXICO:** SB442 (Sanchez) applies to cities with a population of more than 200,000 (Albuquerque) and would limit all fines, fees and costs of a speeding or red light running violation to a maximum of \$75. Ten percent of the money collected would go to DWI drug court programs and 90 percent would be transferred to the New Mexico finance authority for deposit into the metropolitan court bond guarantee fund. Referred 1/28/08 to the judiciary committee, which, without recommendation, referred the bill to the Senate finance committee 1/31/08. *(Albuquerque's city council voted 2/04/08 to reduce fines for red light runners and speeders caught on camera. For red light runners the fine would drop from \$100 to \$69. For speeders going 10 miles over the limit the fine drops from \$100 to \$74, and fines for higher speeds would also be reduced.)*

**NEW YORK:** A 06669 (Hoyt) would authorize the City of Buffalo to implement photo enforcement at intersections and highway-railroad crossings. The bill was introduced and referred to the transportation committee 3/16/07. The companion bill in the Senate, S04523 was referred to the transportation committee 04/18/2007. Both bills were referred to transportation committees 01/09/08.

**OHIO:** HB 30 (McGregor) would require any community using red light or speed limit enforcement cameras to post signs at every community entry point. Introduced on 2/20/07. Referred to the House Committee on Infrastructure, Homeland Security and Veterans Affairs. Approved by the House 6/27/07, introduced in the Senate 7/2/07 and sent to the Highways and Transportation Committee.

**OREGON:** HB 2508 (sponsored by the Committee on Judiciary by request of Oregon Association Chiefs of Police) lifted restrictions that allowed only Newburg and cities with populations of more than 30,000 to install and operate red light cameras. The bill allows cities of any size to use cameras and removes restrictions on the number of intersections. Went into effect 01/01/08.

**PENNSYLVANIA:** HB 17 (Markosek, Geist) extends Philadelphia's three-year pilot red light camera program to 2011. The legislature rejected attempts to redirect some of the ticket revenue from the state Department of Transportation to the Philadelphia School District. The Philadelphia Parking Authority operates the camera program at 10 intersections. The bill passed the House and the Senate 12/12/07 and was signed by the governor 12/18/07.

**WISCONSIN:** AB 528 (Zepnick) would enable cities, towns, and villages to implement their own red light camera programs. Introduced 10/04/07 and referred to Committee on Urban and Local Affairs, which held a public hearing 01/08/08. No vote was taken.

### **SPEEDING SAFETY CAMERAS**

**OREGON:** HB 2466 (Lim) allows Gladstone, Milwaukie and Oregon City to operate speed cameras. They join Portland and six other cities where speed cameras are allowed. The bill also allows the state Department of Transportation to operate speed camera programs in highway work zones. Went into effect 01/01/08.

## Federal Judge Rejects Constitutional Challenge to Chicago Red Light Camera Program

In dismissing a lawsuit challenging Chicago's red light camera program, U.S. District Judge Robert Gettleman agreed with city officials who said it was lawful to hold car owners responsible for what's done with their vehicles.

Lawyers for two businesses and one individual contended the ordinance was unconstitutional because \$90 tickets are issued to car owners whether or not they are behind the wheel at the time of the traffic offense.

Gettleman's ruling was handed down in mid-January.

## Speed and Red Light Cameras on Governors' 2008 Agendas

Governors in New York, Connecticut and Maryland are among those wanting to enlist speed and/or red light cameras as part of their efforts to reduce dangerous driving behaviors.

In Maryland, speed camera legislation is among the package of 18 bills that Gov. Martin O'Malley is asking the General Assembly to pass during its 90-day session. The bill would give other communities similar authority to that of Montgomery County, which allows speed cameras in school zones and residential areas with a speed limit of 35 mph or less. The governor is also proposing the use of photo enforcement cameras in work zones.

In presenting her new budget this month, Connecticut Gov. M. Jodi Rell requested funding for a speed camera pilot program along a dangerous stretch of I-95. The Associated Press reported that on the opening day of the legislative session, Rell said, "To those of you who use this congested highway as their personal speedway — we're going to see you and we're going to stop you. And it will cost you."

And in New York state — where in 1993 New York City began operating the first red light camera program in the country — Gov. Eliot Spitzer has proposed that the state approve up to 50 red light cameras each in Rochester, Buffalo, Syracuse, Yonkers, and Nassau and Suffolk counties. Buffalo officials were unsuccessful last year in their lobbying efforts for red light cameras.

According to an article in the Jan. 24, *Rochester Democrat and Chronicle*, "New York City's most recent statistical report shows a 9 percent reduction in injuries at the 40 intersections that received cameras between 2001 and 2006. Pedestrian injuries dropped 40 percent at intersections with cameras, while motorist injuries declined 6 percent. The seriousness of injury also declined, according to the city's Department of Transportation."



from the  
National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running