

# SAFETY FOCUS

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*This issue focuses on the Campaign's legislative work in several key states, the Campaign's recent participation in the Lifesavers Conference and a review of all pending state red light and speed limit photo enforcement legislation.*

## Campaign Active In Key State Legislative Efforts

From Concord, New Hampshire to Montgomery, Alabama the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running has been actively assisting traffic safety and law enforcement groups in working to expand, and in some cases, defend the growing use of automated traffic enforcement technologies.

Camera opponents, led by the National Motorists Association, have attempted to distort the traffic safety benefits of the technology with skewed interpretations of new research studies to create doubt among lawmakers.

Luckily, the testimony of key traffic safety advocates and the total weight of the recent academic research on automated enforcement technology have helped reassure legislators and shift the debate away from unfounded concerns and back to improving traffic safety.

In states like Alabama, Florida, Indiana, Nevada, South Carolina and Texas, the willingness of red light running survivor advocates to speak out and show that red light running impacts real people has been instrumental in increasing support among legislators.

In many cases, local legislators and grassroots supporters have sought out the assistance of the Campaign when camera opponents have countered

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## Hispanic Outreach Opportunity

The Campaign has been reaching out to the Hispanic communities in Florida and Texas since they are at particular risk from red light running, (See story on Page 4) Safety advocates fluent in Spanish are urgently needed to speak to the media on behalf of the Campaign. Call **202-828-9100** to help.

## Lifesavers Conference Adds New Campaign Supporters

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running once again exhibited a booth at the 2005 Lifesavers Conference from March 13-15 in Charlotte, NC.

Campaign staff shared the latest red light running and enforcement information with over 150 visitors to our display and added a wider group of traffic safety professionals to the *Safety Focus* newsletter distribution list.

The conference gave the Campaign an excellent opportunity to share our message with many potential supporters for legislation underway in key states.

At the conclusion of the conference, the Campaign provided a supply of 2004 National Stop on Red Week baseball posters to Charlotte-area police to use in their public outreach activities.



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logic with fear, selective research and bogus arguments to spread doubt in the minds of the public, state and municipal legislators.

"Throughout this busy legislative season, the Campaign has been able to utilize many different resources to provide our grassroots supporters with the best information for making the case for traffic safety and photo enforcement," said Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey.

Red light camera legislation is still under discussion in many states, and additional support is needed in **Alabama, Florida, Illinois, New York, Nevada, Ohio, South Carolina, Texas** and other states. Expansion bills are making progress in **Oregon** and **Washington**.

The Campaign stands ready to work with any local traffic safety advocates on automated enforcement issues. The vocal minority who oppose cameras can be effectively countered.

To contact the Campaign, call 202-828-9100 or e-mail us through the Campaign website at [info@stopredlightrunning.com](mailto:info@stopredlightrunning.com)



## Room For Improvement

A new survey of 1,000 UK motorists found:

**37%** did not consider jumping (running) a red light an extremely dangerous act;  
**44%** owned up to speeding on motorways and **38%** in 40mph areas;  
**8%** admit text messaging on mobile phones while driving, with **26%** of Scottish drivers talking into a phone while at the wheel;  
**50%** think fines should be imposed for motoring offenses rather than the imposition of bans and license penalty points.

Source: *The Scotsman* newspaper

# Campaign Testifies Against Anti-Camera Bills

In a little over a month, Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey has testified against two of the most serious threats to automated traffic enforcement in the 2005 legislative season. Separate bills in the Texas and Ohio state legislatures are attempting to rollback the positive traffic safety gains that have been made in "home rule" cities like Garland, Texas and Dayton and Toledo, Ohio.

On March 16, Blakey traveled to Columbus, Ohio to testify against HB 56, sponsored by Rep. Jim Raussen of Cincinnati. The bill had previously been heard at two hearings, the first for the sponsor, and the second for supporters (which included the National Motorists Association). Blakey joined representatives from the Toledo and Dayton police departments and representatives from other Ohio communities that are actively pursuing red light camera programs.

Blakey told members of the House Transportation, Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee that the testimony provided at the previous hearings was misleading, and in some cases, completely wrong, in portraying the photo enforcement records of other communities across the country.

Blakey also took the opportunity to help dispel some of the common misconceptions about red light cameras previously voiced, including privacy concerns and that photo enforcement violates due process provisions of the Constitution.

On April 14, Blakey testified before the Texas Senate's Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs to oppose a House bill which would prevent Texas cities from using civil "home rule" authority to operate red light cameras.

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## NOTABLE QUOTE

**“I’m not giving up. We were a normal, loving family and I thanked God for our life together every day. If something like this can happen to us, it can happen to anyone at any moment.”**

**- Melissa Wandall, quoted in the *Sarasota Herald Tribune*, explaining her support for Florida red light camera enabling legislation after the death of her husband Mark in a 2003 red light running crash.**

### Bill Info



**Ohio House Bill 56**  
Sponsor: Rep. Jim Raussen

**What it would do:**  
Prohibit any Ohio community from using automated enforcement technology unless a police officer is physically present.



**Texas House Bill 259**  
Sponsor: Rep. Gary Elkins

**What it would do:**  
Prohibit any Texas community from using "home rule" civil authority to operate automated enforcement technology.

# 2005 National Stop on Red Week

The U.S. Federal Highway Administration has announced that 2005 National Stop on Red Week will be held from August 27th through September 2nd.

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running is currently in the process of planning a full schedule of 2005 outreach activities. Watch for updates in future editions of *Safety Focus*.

A yellow rectangular graphic with text and a photograph. The text reads: "2005 NATIONAL STOP ON RED WEEK AUG. 27 - SEPT. 2 www.stopredlightrunning.com". The photograph shows a traffic light with the red light illuminated.

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Blakey was joined by Garland police and city officials, as well as Gary Hind, a Dallas survivor advocate, and other Texas law enforcement personnel.

Blakey told the committee that other Texas cities deserve to have the opportunity to pursue photo enforcement systems since

the state continues to have a serious red light running problem.

The committee has yet to rule on the legislation. If it becomes law, Garland will have to stop its program and several other Texas cities, including Houston, will be prevented from installing cameras that have already been approved by local ordinances.

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## Popular Miami Priest Killed In Red Light Crash

A popular Miami priest became one of Florida's latest red light running casualties after an April 14th crash.

According to news reports, the Rev. Angel Villaronga was driving westbound on Northwest 20th Street when the driver of a Chevrolet ran the northbound red light, striking Villaronga's car and an Isuzu.

Villaronga was transported to Jackson Memorial Hospital Trauma, where he was pronounced dead.

The occupants of the Isuzu were not injured, and the driver that police said ran the red light suffered minor trauma. He was treated and released from Jackson Memorial.

Miami-Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez said in a statement: "Father Villaronga touched the lives of thousands...and dedicated his life to serving others. Father Villaronga will be missed, but his legacy will always be remembered."

The driver was cited for running the light.

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### Attention Campaign Members!

Do you have friends, family or colleagues who would be interested in receiving our newsletter? Do you regularly forward the newsletter on to others? Help us increase awareness of the dangers of red light running by asking anyone who is interested to e-mail us at [info@stopredlightrunning.com](mailto:info@stopredlightrunning.com) and be added to our mailing list.

# Legislative Update — April 2005

*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 15 (Grimes) would allow red light cameras for misdemeanor traffic offenses. It was read for a second time before the House on 3/3/05.

SB 200 (Poole) very similar to the House bill. It is awaiting a Third Reading in the Senate Transportation Committee.

**Arizona:** HB 2119 (Biggs) would waive points if photo enforcement fines paid within 30 days of violation. Awaiting First Reading in the House.

HB 2260 (Gray) would require driver identification by photo enforcement systems. Awaiting First Reading in the House.

SB 1326 (Verschoor) would require all photo enforcement programs to have flat fee contracts. Held in Transportation Committee 2/15/05.

SB 1328 (Verschoor) would waive points if photo enforcement fines paid within 30 days of violation. Awaiting First Reading in the House.

**Florida:** H 1439 (Reagan) would allow counties or cities to establish red light camera systems. It has been referred to the House Transportation Committee.

SB 2252 (Wise) Senate companion bill to House bill. Referred to Senate Transportation Committee.

**Illinois:** HB 3463 (Cullerton) would expand the use of red light cameras to Illinois cities other than Chicago. Passed the House by a vote of 84-32 on April 13. Referred to Senate Rules Committee.

**Indiana:** SB 570 (Mishler) which would establish 10 pilot red light camera program cities passed the full Senate by a vote of 31-17, and was approved by the House Transportation and Roadways Committee, but was defeated by a floor vote in the Indiana House.

**Nevada:** AB 11 would repeal the prohibition against use of photographic equipment to gather evidence for issuance of traffic citations. Referred to Judiciary Committee.

SB 473 would authorize the issuance of traffic citations electronically. Approved by the Senate Committee on Transportation and Homeland Security on 4/12/05.

**New York:** S 139 (Trunzo) would authorize Suffolk County or of any municipality within Suffolk County to establish a program imposing monetary liability on the registrant of a vehicle for failure of an operator to comply with traffic-control indications; provides for the installation of red light cameras.

**Ohio:** HB 56 (Raussen) would ban the use of automated enforcement technology. A third hearing was held on 3/16/05 in the House Transportation, Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee.

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# Legislative Update — April 2005

**Oregon:** SB 153 (Metzler) This bill is aimed at the Beaverton program, which Metzler says is overstepping the law by requiring vehicle owners to identify people who were driving their vehicles. A red light and photo red sunset clause has been removed from the bill. Approved as amended by Trans. Committee on 3/28/05. Sent to Senate Judiciary Committee.

**South Carolina:** SB 0040 (Richardson) would allow cities with populations over 20,000 to establish red light camera systems. Approved by the Senate Transportation Committee.

**Texas:** HB 259 (Elkins) would repeal language that allows civil enforcement of red light running violations. Approved by the House, it was heard by the Senate Committee on Intergovernmental Affairs on 4/14/05. A committee vote has been pending since the hearing.

HB 665 (Isett) would be a total prohibition on all photo enforcement programs. It was approved by the House Urban Affairs Committee is awaiting a vote by the House.

**Utah:** A House bill that would have allowed red light cameras was struck down by the House Law Enforcement And Criminal Justice Committee by a vote of 3-6.

**Virginia:** All five House bills and all four Senate bills that would have extended or eliminated the sunset on the Virginia red light camera enabling law were defeated by the House Militia, Police and Public Safety Committee. Gov. Warner declined to intervene before the legislature adjourned.

**Washington:** SB 5060 (Haugen) would authorize local jurisdictions to use red light cameras. Passed the Senate on 3/15/05 by a vote of 30 to 19. Referred to the House, passed on third reading by a vote of 61-33 on 4/15/05. **Sent to Governor Christine Gregoire for review on 4/18/05.**

## **SPEEDING SAFETY CAMERAS**

**Arizona:** SB 1164 (Verschoor) would prohibit photo radar on freeways. Passed by the Senate and narrowly approved by the House. An amendment would exempt the City of Scottsdale.

**California:** SB 466 (Kuehl) would allow the use of photo radar in residential areas. Amended to only allow enforcement in school zones and residential areas with posted speed limits under 30 mph. Referred back to Sen. Trans. and Housing committee as amended.

**Georgia:** H 294 (Miller) would authorize the use of speed cameras in school zones from one hour before and until one hour after normal school operations. \$100 civil fine would be imposed. It has passed the House and has been referred to the Senate.

**Maryland:** H.B. 443 (Bronrott) would permit the placement of speed monitoring systems on specified roads in Montgomery County. **Approved by state legislature, sent to Gov. Robert Ehrlich for his review.**

**Oregon:** HB 2364 (Tomei) would expand the use of photo radar technology to the cities of Lake Oswego, Milwaukie and Roseburg. Currently in House Trans. Committee.