

SAFETY FOCUS

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This issue focuses on the Campaign's involvement in grassroots work in Florida and Virginia, news updates from Canada and the IIHS, and a review of all pending state red light running and speed limit photo enforcement legislation.

Campaign Increasing Activity In Key States

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running has been closely monitoring photo enforcement developments in Virginia and Florida and has started early coordination work for a wide array of grassroots efforts for the coming 2005 legislative season.

Virginia

Virginia is facing a July 1, 2005 sunset of the law that allowed several communities in the state to establish their own red light camera programs. Six cities in Northern Virginia have had successful camera programs for years, and the City of Virginia Beach has just recently started an ambitious camera program.

If the sunset is not extended or repealed, all camera programs in Virginia will have to be turned off. Despite widespread public support for the cameras, especially in the communities where they are in use, the Virginia House of Delegates Committee with jurisdiction over the red light camera law has shown limited interest in continuing the program and has repeatedly blocked efforts to expand the legislation to allow other communities to establish their own camera programs.

The Campaign is part of a diverse coalition of Virginia traffic safety, law enforcement, insurance industry and health care organizations determined to fight to preserve the existing camera programs. The coalition believes Virginians know the importance of these programs and need to understand the potential calamities that could result if the state legislature rescinds the ability of Virginia communities to use automated traffic enforcement technology.

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Additionally, the Campaign is working to keep this issue in the media forefront by contacting reporters at all major Virginia newspapers and sharing the latest research and statistics about red light cameras.

Florida

In Florida, several recent highly-publicized tragedies involving red light running crashes have prompted a new interest in enacting some form of enabling legislation.

An October red light running crash that killed two small girls as they walked across a street with their mother prompted Ann Sweet, the Campaign Survivor Spokesperson, to send letters to every Campaign member in Florida to alert them to the need for new legislation. (see Nov. *Safety Focus*).

The Campaign has also been in contact with many individuals who are tired of the increasing carnage on their roads and share the belief that red light cameras could provide an effective deterrent for red light running and aggressive driving.

Additionally, a pilot camera program is being pursued in Manatee County, south of Tampa Bay. The cameras will be installed at several intersections that have high traffic crash rates, but since there is no legal authority to ticket offenders, they will instead be sent a warning in the mail.

The Manatee County Chamber of Commerce has publicly said that it intends to direct its energies in the state capital to pursuing enabling legislation to allow red light cameras in 2005.

Leslie Blakey, Executive Director of the Campaign said, "These two states must be a priority for the coming year. We cannot stand by while a handful of elected officials seem determined to dismantle the entire network of red light cameras in Virginia. Likewise, the public outcry in Florida for action in the wake of so much

Anatomy Of A Crash

The City of Alexandria, Virginia has released these "before" and "after" photos of a crash at one of their camera intersections in April of this year. In the top photo, the Isuzu Trooper in the right center of the photo has just crossed the intersection threshold a full six seconds after it turned red!



The photo below, taken a second later, shows the Isuzu striking one of two cars turning left at the intersection at a speed of 34 mph! If the law that established this and many other Virginia red light cameras is allowed to sunset next year, this camera will no longer be ticketing violators and providing valuable information about aggressive drivers like the one in the Isuzu Trooper.



senseless loss should encourage the state legislature to look to red light cameras as part of the solution."

If you live in either state and want to help, please contact the Campaign at 202-828-9100 or by e-mail at info@stopredlightrunning.com.

U.S. State Dept.: Watch Out For Canadian Red Light Runners!

Red light running in Canada received some recent attention by the news media in both Canada and the U.S. when it was reported that the U.S. State Department had issued an updated travel warning to U.S. citizens traveling to Canada.

Of special concern to the State Department, along with winter driving conditions and watching out for wildlife on roadways at night, was the danger specifically posed by red light runners.

"Drivers should be aware that the frequency with which motorists run red lights is a serious concern throughout Canada, and motorists are advised to pause before proceeding when a light turns green."

Several news reports said the City of Montreal in particular is the likely reason for the warning because of lax enforcement and limited civil and criminal penalties for red light runners.

Traffic safety advocates have been pressing the province to install red light cameras, which exist elsewhere in Canada, but the idea has not been well-received by the Quebec government.

Greensboro Red Light Camera Study Called "Junk Science"

Researchers at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety have issued the following response to a recent study by two North Carolina A&T State University researchers that claimed the installation of red light cameras has led to a substantial increase in crashes. The following are excerpts from the IIHS response.

Policy decisions about highway safety —which programs to implement? which ones already in operation are worth continuing?— should be guided by scientific evaluations of program effectiveness. Few would argue with this approach. Still, there's the issue of how competent the evaluations are. As in many applied fields, highway safety isn't lacking for junk science.

A recent example is the investigation of the effects of red light cameras in Greensboro, North Carolina. Authors Mark Burkey and Kofi Obeng of the North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University concluded that installing cameras led to a 42 percent increase in crashes at intersections where cameras were installed.

One flaw is that they used intersections in the same community without cameras as controls. "This ignores the well-known spillover effect," said IIHS Researcher Richard Retting. That is, the effects of cameras spill over to intersections without cameras. Publicity and media coverage makes drivers aware of the general presence of cameras in the community. The result is a generalized change in behavior...this is why assigning signalized intersections in the same community as controls compromises the findings.

A worse problem is that Burkey and Obeng treated data from intersections with and without cameras as if the cameras had been randomly assigned, but they were placed at intersections with high crash histories.

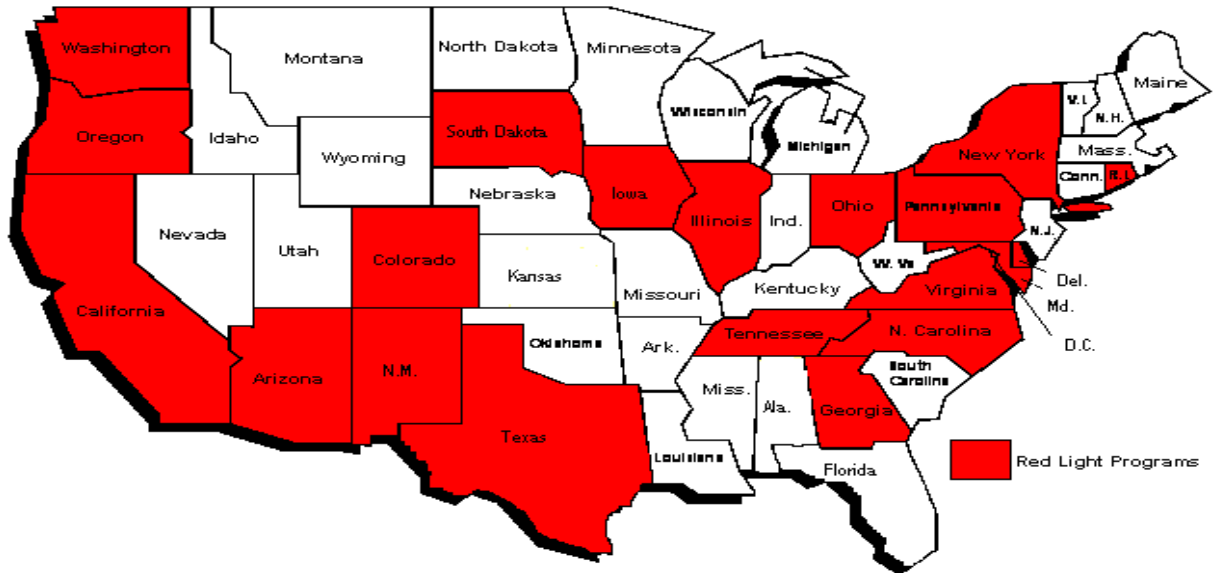
Burkey and Obeng's investigation isn't published in the scientific literature. This means it hasn't been subjected to peer review, which involves critique by impartial experts to determine the validity of the methods and findings.

"If Burkey and Obeng's report had been subjected to peer review, the reviewers would have pointed out the obvious flaws. Absent such a review, policymakers should ignore Burkey and Obeng's conclusions," Retting said.

COMING SOON....

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running will soon add the map seen below as an interactive part of our website. The map, which currently only shows the states with communities that use red light cameras, will be enhanced to allow web surfers to scroll over each state and then view an updated list of the communities in that state that use red light enforcement cameras.

Red Light Camera Programs



*Have A Safe And Happy
Holiday Season!*



National
Campaign
to Stop
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Running
www.stoppedlightrunning.com

Did You Know?

Crashes caused by red light running most often result in right-angle impacts (often called T-bone crashes).

According to the latest Insurance Institute for Highways Safety crash tests, the **2004 Saab 9-3**, **2004 Acura TL**, **2004 Lexus ES 330**, and **2005 Mitsubishi Galant** received the best ratings for side impact protection among midsize cars.

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 who are interested? 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 and be added to our mailing list.

Legislative Update — December 2004

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.

RED LIGHT RUNNING: SAFETY CAMERAS

Minnesota: The Minneapolis City Council's Public Safety and Regulatory Services Committee recently approved a request for proposals (RFP) to purchase red light cameras, computers and citation processing systems to run the program. The city plans to select a vendor by Jan. 19 and begin installation by April 25. Police would start a 30-day test on May 25, offering a grace period during which violators would receive a warning, not a fine.

Ohio: According to a Dec 14th report in the *Cincinnati Enquirer*, the Cincinnati City Council has approved the installation of red light and speed limit enforcement cameras as an item in the city budget. The cameras are to be installed and operational by May, 2005 at selected locations around the city.

Pennsylvania: H.B. 2357 (Horsey) would permit the installation of speed cameras in all 15 mph school zones in first-class cities. The bill was amended by the House to strike any mention of photo enforcement, and referred to the Senate Committee on Transportation. This bill died at the end of the 2004 legislative session in December.

H.B. 1315 (Godshall) would authorize a police officer to give a citation to a bus driver caught violating traffic laws via a camera located on the bus. This bill died at the end of the 2004 legislative session in December.

Virginia: S.B. 92 (Devolites) authorizes statewide use of red light cameras and addresses several opponents' concerns with photo enforcement. The bill was withdrawn at a hearing of the House Committee on Militia, Police and Public Safety on Nov. 15th. Rep. Devolites said that she intends to introduce similar legislation in 2005.

H.B. 19 (McQuigg) would expand photo-monitoring systems for traffic signal enforcement to all of Virginia, assuming vehicle owner liability. The bill was withdrawn at a hearing of the House Committee on Militia, Police and Public Safety on Nov. 15th.

H.B. 370 (Rust) which would repeal the July 1, 2005, "sunset" on photo red programs in Virginia, was withdrawn at a hearing of the House Committee on Militia, Police and Public Safety on Nov. 15th.

Ontario, Canada: The Ontario government says it has plugged a loophole that resulted in photos of accused red light runners being tossed out of court. The revisions by the Ministry of Transportation came after a ruling by the Ontario Court of Appeals in October that deemed photographs of red light runners inadmissible as evidence. Judges ruled the photographs did not comply with Traffic Act requirements that the date, time and location of the alleged crime have to be visible in the picture. That problem has been corrected.

SPEEDING SAFETY CAMERAS

Maryland: S.B. 1388 (Bronrott) would permit the placement of speed monitoring systems on specified highways in Montgomery and Prince George's counties. The legislation was referred to the Environmental Matters Committee without a final vote until next year. There was a working group session on the legislation on Nov. 9th. The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running presented information on behalf of the legislation.