

SAFETY FOCUS

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This issue focuses on the red light camera prohibition bill in the Ohio legislature, disturbing new Virginia statistics, AAA's call to reinstate red light cameras in Virginia and very encouraging new poll results from Missouri.

Campaign Takes On Ohio Anti-Camera Legislation

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running has been working closely with Ohio cities, law enforcement, the insurance industry and red light running survivor advocates to stop legislation that would effectively stop the growing number of cities using automated enforcement across the state.

Legislation authored by Rep. James Raussen (R-Springdale) would require a law enforcement officer to be present wherever automated enforcement equipment is used, and then chase down and issue the citations to violators. The legislation closely mirrors an automated enforcement "model law" compiled by a national policy organization which opposes the use of red light cameras.

This requirement would effectively prohibit the use of the technology as a tool for law enforcement, as it eliminates the "force multiplier" advantage in using automated enforcement and would keep law enforcement officers in harm's way while enforcing red light running and speeding violations.

The legislation was approved by the House earlier this year and is now being considered by the Senate Committee on Highways and Transportation.

Since the legislation was introduced, Cleveland and Columbus have approved red light camera programs and have joined forces to fight the legislation along with cities like Dayton and Toledo that have active camera programs. The Campaign has helped to coordinate the activities of the broad coalition at several hearings held over the past few weeks.

On Oct. 25th, Campaign Communications Director Jeff Agnew testified against the bill and released the results of a poll conducted by Zogby International, which showed a majority of Ohioans opposed any attempt by the legislature to prohibit the use of red light cameras.

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Agnew told the committee that the poll found support for red light cameras strongest among: people ages 70 and older (73 percent), women (57 percent), residents of suburbs (60 percent) and rural areas (57 percent), Republicans (58 percent) and Protestants (61 percent).

The strongest opposition to the use of red light cameras for traffic enforcement came from: Libertarians (61 percent), people with incomes under \$15,000 per year (62 percent), younger drivers from ages 18 to 29 (57 percent), residents of large cities (49 percent) and single people (47 percent).

Ironically, lower income or unemployed drivers and younger drivers (or two of the five largest opposition groups identified by the Ohio poll) are general characteristics of drivers who are more likely to run red lights according to a 1999 study conducted by a team of researchers led by Dr. Bryan Porter, a professor at Old Dominion University and a member of the Campaign's voluntary Advisory Board.

Agnew also told the committee that the two largest Ohio cities with red light cameras have seen significant decreases in intersection crashes and violations.

Dayton, which began its project in February of 2003, has found that crashes have been reduced by 42 percent at eight intersections monitored by red light cameras.

Toledo has seen traffic crashes at intersections with red light cameras drop 36 percent since they were installed.

NOTABLE QUOTE

"I wish I could take all those people who run red lights, bring them up to the special care unit and sit them there with the families who are waiting to hear about their loved ones; whether they are going to die or be in a wheelchair for life. In a blink of an eye, you can just ruin people's lives. It's just ridiculous at this point. You stop for a red light."

--quote from an unnamed volunteer at the Maine Medical Center from an Oct. 31st article on red light running in the *Portland Press Herald*

Bill Info



Ohio House Bill 56
Sponsor: Rep. Jim Raussen

What it would do:
Prohibit any Ohio

community from using automated red light or speed limit enforcement technology unless a police officer is physically present and the citation is given at the time of the infraction.

Current status: The legislation was approved by the House, and has been referred to the Senate Committee on Highways and Transportation.

An initial Senate hearing was held on Oct. 4th. Additional hearings were held on Oct. 25th and Nov. 2nd. At least one additional public hearing may be held on the legislation in coming weeks.

The hearings also saw testimony from red light running survivor advocates Paul and Sue Oberhauser (See October 2005 *Safety Focus*), Anne McCartt with the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, numerous law enforcement officials, a representative from a Columbus bicycling advocacy group and several advocates for visually-impaired pedestrians.

Editorials supporting the use of red light cameras have been published in the *Toledo Blade*, the *Dayton Daily News*, the *Columbus Dispatch* and the *Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

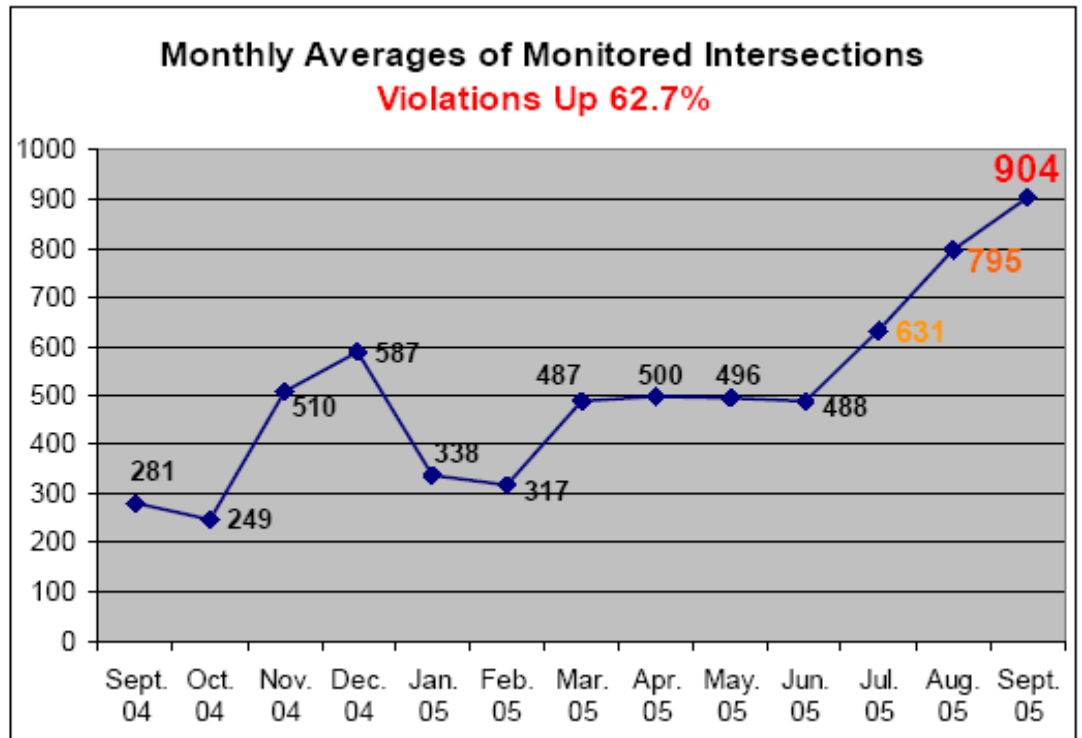
Red Light Running Spikes After Law Sunsets

The City of Virginia Beach has continued to monitor red light running violations since the law that allowed some cities in the state to use red light cameras was allowed to sunset in July.

An analysis by the city has found an overall red light running violation spike of 62.7 percent at the four intersections which utilized red light cameras.

The disturbing results reinforce the deterrent value of automated enforcement which was ignored by the state legislature earlier this year, along with other benefits of the technology.

Virginia Beach officials also noted a sharp drop after the holiday season in 2005 as word of the program became widespread, but violations started to creep up as news about



the red light camera fight in the legislature cast doubt on the future of the program.

City officials said they intend to widely distribute the information to legislators as they seek to reinstate the camera law in the upcoming 2006 legislative session.

AAA Says Virginia Erred On Cameras

A prominent motorist advocacy organization is calling for the reinstatement of Virginia's red light camera program. Lon Anderson, spokesperson for AAA Mid-Atlantic, told attendees at the Virginia Transportation Conference in Roanoke that, "turning off the cameras was a huge mistake" during a speech on October 27th.

Anderson cited statistics released by the City of Virginia Beach (cited above) that demonstrate a serious spike in red light running violations at intersections where red light cameras had been deployed.

Anderson also brought up the comments of Virginia House Speaker Howell at a June meeting where he said the cameras were turned off for political, rather than policy reasons (see July 2005 *Safety Focus*) and

quoted Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey who noted that the House committee that killed the red light camera bills is composed heavily of rural legislators who do not understand the conditions drivers in the more urban areas of Virginia face in terms of red light running and aggressive driving.

Anderson said Virginia's "Photo Red" systems have passed all tests in the critical areas of privacy, equal protection, and due process, and the systems enjoy strong public support.

"Photo Red technology represents a common sense approach to the enforcement of traffic laws, which are inherently designed to keep our roadways safe," Anderson said. "To abandon a program which increased safety in Virginia was unwise and unsafe."

DC Named Strict Enforcement Area By AAA

AAA Mid-Atlantic recently petitioned the AAA National office to designate Washington, DC as a "strict enforcement zone" to reflect the impact of the city's extensive network of red light and speed limit enforcement cameras.

Washington, DC Mayor Anthony Williams responded to the news by saying, "We wear AAA's designation of Washington, DC as a 'strict enforcement area' as a badge of honor, because our city IS a strict enforcement zone – we're a strict enforcement zone because we know that strict enforcement, when combined with education and engineering, makes our roadways safer and saves lives. For families crossing streets with children in

strollers or for seniors who cross streets as they do errands, slowing traffic is a very good thing.

Strict enforcement is why last year we saw a 35 percent reduction in traffic fatalities, which was the top reduction in traffic fatalities in the nation. We appreciate AAA Mid-Atlantic helping us spread the word about the need for everyone to follow traffic laws while in DC."

In a November 19th article in *The Washington Times*, the news was also hailed by DC Police Chief Charles Ramsey as further proof of the city's progress in holding drivers accountable for their actions.

The article also quoted an official with the Washington D.C. Convention & Tourism

Corporation who praised the designation.

"I think it's great," Bill Hanbury, the organization's chief executive officer, said.

"Shouldn't we be proud of the fact that there's a 36 percent reduction in highway fatalities in the District?"

In 2004 Washington, DC had 17.7 million visitors, placing it among the top U.S. tourist destinations.

AAA said the policy change will mean that any member who inquires about traveling to the District will be notified of the strict enforcement designation.

Cities Approve Cameras On The Same Day

November 8th proved to be a momentous day for traffic safety efforts for cities in Tennessee and Texas.

City councils in El Paso, TX and Knoxville, TN approved new red light camera systems on the same day.

El Paso council members voted to place cameras at up to 10 intersections in the city with past red light running crash problems.

Civil citations would be sent out via mail. The penalty for the first and second violations for red light violators will be a \$75 civil fine. The penalty jumps to

\$150 dollars for the third violation.

Meanwhile, Knoxville city officials voted 6-3 to install cameras at an undetermined number of intersections. Images of violators will be reviewed by Knoxville Police Department officers who will make a determination as to whether citations will be issued.

According to a story in the *Knoxville News Sentinel*, Deb Maupin, a former emergency room nurse, asked the council to pass the measure after describing injuries suffered by her daughter in 2002 when the teen was struck by a driver who ran a red light.

El Paso, TX

Population: 563,662

Area: 250 square miles

University: Univ. of Texas at El Paso

City Nickname: Star of the Southwest

Trivia: Second largest U.S. city on the border with Mexico

Knoxville, TN

Population: 173,890

Area: 98 square miles

University: Univ. of Tennessee at Knoxville

City Nickname: The Marble City from 1900s marble distribution.

Trivia: Birthplace of singer Kenny Chesney

Poll Finds Strong Support For Safety Cameras In Missouri

The results of a new poll by a Missouri insurance organization shows very strong support for red light camera systems.

The Missouri Insurance Coalition commissioned a poll which was conducted by Zogby International using a sample of 602 likely voters.

The survey found eight out of ten Missourians (81 percent) favor using red light cameras at Missouri's most dangerous intersections to monitor drivers who run red lights. This includes more than four in five in the Kansas City and St. Louis metro areas.

The Missouri poll mirrored the results of red light camera polling in other states in that Missourians 50 and older are more likely than those under 50 to favor using these cameras, though again, support is still high among these younger respondents.

Over 75 percent of respondents said they were also willing to support installation of the automated cameras because traffic violators, not local and state governments, end up bearing the cost of the program's operation and maintenance.

The results of the poll were featured in a recent article in the *Kansas City Star*, which said that the results even surprised the insurers.

"The poll results were very, very convincing," said Calvin Call of the coalition. "It's hard to dispute that running red lights is bad behavior. This technology is like having a policeman sitting there at the stoplight. It doesn't make you a better driver, but you're much more likely to obey the law knowing the red-light cameras are there."

Missouri is one of the states that has seen a recent surge of interest in red light cameras. Earlier this year, the City of Arnold, which is south of St. Louis, became the first city in the state to install cameras.

The article stated that the Arnold red light cameras had already captured over 400 red light running violations since becoming fully operational in October.

Atlanta Starts Camera Program

Georgia's capital and largest city has now become the latest major U.S. city to use red light cameras for traffic enforcement.

A 30-day warning period ended in October, and citations are being issued. Georgia state law authorizes a maximum fine of \$70 for red light camera citations.

"This is a valuable program that's going to make driving in Atlanta safer for motorists and pedestrians," said David Scott, Atlanta Public Works Commissioner.

"There is no debate that red light runners are a leading cause of crashes. Camera enforcement will help to reduce those crashes."

Have A Safe And Happy Holiday Season!



National
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to Stop
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Running

www.stoppedlightrunning.com

Legislative Update — December 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.

RED LIGHT RUNNING SAFETY CAMERAS

Ohio: HB 56 (Raussen) would ban the use of automated enforcement technology. The House Transportation, Public Safety and Homeland Security Committee approved the bill on 4/4/05 by a vote of 8-3. The full House approved the legislation on 5/18/05. It has been referred to the Senate Committee on Highways and Transportation. An initial hearing was held on 10/4/05 and additional hearings were held on 10/18/05 and 11/02/05.

Massachusetts: HB 2023 (Honan) would authorize the cities of Boston and Cambridge to use automated traffic enforcement devices on certain roadways. Referred to the Joint Committee on Transportation.

Pennsylvania: HB1568 (Creighton) would expand the use of red light cameras to communities other than Philadelphia. Introduced on 5/10/05 and referred to the House Transportation Committee.

Rhode Island: SB 909 (Goodwin) would authorize statewide use of red light cameras. Referred to the Senate Judiciary Committee. Initial hearing held 3/12/05, subsequent hearing held 6/16/05. No further action taken.

HB 6315 (McCauley) House version of Senate bill. Referred to the House Finance Committee. House approved the bill on 6/29/05, the Senate approved the bill on 6/30/05 and **it became law without the Governor's signature on 7/19/05.**

SPEEDING SAFETY CAMERAS

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 Senate Transportation and Housing Committee.

Did You Know?

The Texas cities of Denton, El Paso, Houston, Frisco, Plano, Richardson, and Rowlett have all either approved local ordinances or held public hearings regarding the implementation of red light camera enforcement systems after state legislation that would have prohibited the use of red light cameras failed earlier this year.

Attention Campaign Members!

We are seeking individuals and organizations to help advance our 2006 state legislative advocacy efforts. We need to hear from red light running victims, traffic safety advocates, and law enforcement and health care professionals willing to contact legislators, provide testimony and expand our red light running enforcement efforts.

Please e-mail us at info@stopredlightrunning.com or call 202-828-9100.