

SAFETY FOCUS

Published by The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running



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RED LIGHT RUNNING
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Volume Four No.4

May 2005

This issue focuses on the results of the Campaign's new Texas poll, recent legislative activities in New England and a review of all pending state red light and speed limit photo enforcement legislation.

Poll Shows 2 Out of 3 Texans Want Cameras

A new Texas poll sponsored by the National Campaign To Stop Red Light Running shows 65 percent of registered voters want to allow Texas cities to use red light cameras to crack down on drivers who disregard traffic signals. Two bills currently before the Texas State Senate, and supported by the Texas ACLU, would prohibit the use of red light cameras.

The random sample poll of 806 Texans was conducted over a two-day period last week by Zogby International.

While a majority in virtually every sub-group supported the use of cameras at problem intersections, support was strongest among:

- males (72 percent)
- voters ages 50 and older (80 percent)
- members of the armed forces (73 percent)
- residents of small cities (79 percent) and the suburbs (69 percent)
- voters earning \$75,000 and above per year (75 percent)
- political moderates (76 percent) and conservatives (68 percent)

“This poll reinforces the strong public support for red light camera enforcement in Texas,” said Dallas City Councilwoman Sandy Greyson. “Polls in other areas with two-thirds support have actually increased to 75 percent after photo enforcement programs were established.”

Ms. Greyson's car was struck by a red light runner in the Dallas area in 2003. Her car was totaled and she has fully recovered from her injuries. Ms. Greyson had strongly advocated for red light cameras before being involved in the crash, and remains active in the effort to reduce red light running.

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Governor Signs Washington Safety Camera Bill

Washington has become the first state to approve statewide expansion for photo enforcement in the 2005 legislative season.

Gov. Christine Gregoire signed Senate Bill 5060 on April 28th to authorize the statewide expansion of red light and photo radar.

According to media reports, the cities of Tacoma, Vancouver, Seattle and Spokane are among those that have expressed interest in developing red light camera enforcement programs.

Lakewood's red light camera program has been operational for over three years, but the program would have expired in June had the new legislation not been approved.

The new law will go into effect in July and allow cities to use mobile speed cameras as well as fixed red light cameras at traffic signals, school zones and rail crossings.

Violators will receive civil fines ranging from \$25 to \$250 with the jurisdictions receiving the revenue.

Poll Shows Strong Support For Safety Cameras

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Earlier this session, the Texas House of Representatives approved two pieces of legislation that would prohibit any Texas municipalities from using photo enforcement systems, despite the 20 percent reduction in violations that the City of Garland's red light camera program has produced since 2003.

Several Texas cities have expressed an interest in using the technology, but are worried that the legislature will ban their ability to use the technology.

"The Texas legislators who don't seem to think that red light running is a serious local traffic safety problem obviously do not speak for the majority of Texans who are tired of seeing the senseless carnage on their streets," stated Dottie Hind, a Dallas resident and red light running survivor advocate who has testified before the Texas House of Representatives on this issue. "It is vitally important that Texans let their legislators, especially those in the State Senate, know that they want their cities to continue to have the option of using this lifesaving technology."

Red light cameras use sensor technology embedded in the pavement and cameras mounted at the approaches to

intersections to photograph the rear of vehicles that enter an intersection after the light turns red. The red light cameras in use in Garland do not continuously monitor intersections and drivers are not identified by the photographs. Once a police officer has reviewed the photographs, a civil violation is sent by mail to the registered owner of the vehicle.

Over 110 U.S. cities and towns in 20 states and the District of Columbia now use red light cameras to enforce traffic signal compliance and reduce red light running violations. In April, the Governor of Washington signed legislation that will allow for statewide expansion of red light cameras and similar legislation is underway in Connecticut, Illinois, Nevada, Rhode Island and South Carolina.

Past polling conducted by the Campaign in 2002 found 83 percent national support for red light cameras in cities with a red light running problem and a 2002 national driver survey conducted by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found 75 percent supported the use of cameras at red lights. A poll conducted last year by the Virginia Transportation Research Council found 2 out of 3 Virginians polled supported the use of red light cameras.

Campaign Takes Message To New England

In just the first two weeks of May, the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running has been active on the ground in two legislative efforts that could see a dramatic expansion of red light cameras in the states of Rhode Island and Connecticut.

Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey was in Hartford, CT on May 9th for a press conference with Mayor John DeStefano of New Haven and area law enforcement officers to urge the state legislature to act on House Bill 5744, which would authorize Connecticut communities to use red light cameras. The press conference featured the results of a study of three intersections in New Haven which showed 870 red light violations in just 48 hours.

Blakey explained some of the most common misperceptions about red light cameras to the assembled members of the media including privacy concerns and the idea that photo enforcement violates due process provisions of the Constitution.

Just three days later, Campaign members were in Providence, RI to testify at House and Senate hearings on two identical bills which would allow statewide use of red light cameras in Rhode Island.

Campaign Communications Director Jeff Agnew helped to dispel the objections raised by the Rhode Island ACLU and Shannon Menard, a Rhode Island resident, shared her experience as a red light running crash survivor.



May 9th Hartford, CT press conference attendees included: (left to right) South Windsor Police Chief Gary Tyler, New Haven Mayor John DeStefano, New Haven Police Officer John Magoveney and Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey.

The Campaign also made sure both committees received copies of a little-known study published in 2003 by researchers at the University of Rhode Island. The study included results of hundreds of hours of traffic video camera footage at randomly selected intersections around the state and found that there was a widespread red light running problem.

NOTABLE QUOTE

“There is nothing to be afraid of, it’s just a case of paying attention to what you’re doing and stopping when the light turns red and you’ll be fine.”

- Lt. Jerome Miller of the Sioux Falls, SD Police Department, quoted as part of a Keloland TV story discussing the effectiveness of the city's red light camera program. The city has recorded almost a 50 percent drop in red light violations since the program started a year ago.

Push To Ban Photo Radar On Freeways Fails

The Arizona House of Representatives has defeated legislation which would have prohibited the use of speed limit photo radar units on any Arizona freeway.

The legislative push was viewed as an attempt to stop the City of Scottsdale from using mobile photo radar units to enforce speed limits on a particularly dangerous part of Loop 101. Because of the bill's statewide implications, traffic safety advocates worked to defeat the bill

Sen. Thayer Verschoor, the sponsor of the legislation, repeatedly tried to make the case that the legislation was needed because "no U.S. city currently uses photo radar on freeways."



The Campaign notified Sen. Verschoor's staff in January that this was incorrect, since Washington, DC has deployed mobile photo radar units on Interstate 295 and Interstate 395 for over a year.

Now that their program is no longer in any jeopardy, the City of Scottsdale intends to continue the move to deploy the photo radar units as originally planned.

Safety Camera Poles Get Student Makeover

A recent workshop in Winnipeg, Manitoba allowed some students to creatively draw driver attention



Winnipeg students get creative in decorating a red light camera poll.

to two new red light camera poles which will be installed near two elementary schools.

Of the 12 new Winnipeg camera locations to be installed in 2005, two of the selected sites are close to two elementary schools.

Members of the Winnipeg Police Services invited students from those schools to paint the poles in any fashion they saw fit. The poles will be more visible to approaching drivers and students will have a greater sense of "ownership" of the new traffic safety device around their school.

This activity could be duplicated in other cities for a fun and easy way to promote 2005 National Stop on Red Week, which will be held from Aug. 27th through Sept. 2nd.

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 and be added to our mailing list.

Legislative Update — May 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

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, but was denied a vote and was killed after the 4/3/05 crossover deadline.

SB 200 (Poole) very similar to the House bill. It was awaiting a Third Reading in the Senate Transportation Committee, but was not approved by the 4/3/05 crossover deadline.

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.

Connecticut: HB 5744 (Judiciary Committee) would authorize speed and red light cameras in Connecticut municipalities. Referred to the House Transportation Committee on 5/17/05

Florida: H 1439 (Reagan) would allow counties or cities to establish red light cameras. It was referred to the House Judiciary Committee, where it died at the end of the 2005 legislative session.

SB 2252 (Wise) Senate companion bill to House bill. Referred to Senate Transportation Committee, where it died at the end of the 2005 legislative session.

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 Transportation Committee.

Indiana: SB 570 (Mishler) would have established 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: SB 473 would authorize the issuance of traffic citations electronically. Approved by the full Senate on 4/26/05 by a vote of 16-4, referred to House Judiciary Committee.

New York: S 139 (Trunzo) would authorize Suffolk County or any municipality within Suffolk County to establish a program imposing owner liability and provide for the installation of red light 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. It will now go before the full House.

Legislative Update — May 2005

Oregon: SB 153 (Metzler) would prevent cities from requiring vehicle owners suspected of running a redlight from having to identify people who were driving their vehicles. A red light camera sunset clause has been removed from the bill. Approved as amended by the Transportation Committee on 3/28/05. Sent to Senate Judiciary 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.

HB 6315 (McCauley) House version of Senate bill. Referred to the House Finance Committee. Initial hearing held 3/13/05.

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 later approved by a vote of 4-2 in the Senate Intergovernmental Affairs Committee, but failed to receive enough votes to be considered by the Senate on 5/12/05.

HB 665 (Isett) would be a total prohibition of all photo enforcement programs. It was approved by the House Urban Affairs Committee and the full House, but has not been assigned to a Senate committee.

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.

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. **Signed into law by Governor Christine Greoire on 4/21/05.**

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 have exempted the City of Scottsdale. **Defeated on a final House vote on 4/3/05.**

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.

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 Transportation Committee.