

# SAFETY FOCUS

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*This issue focuses on the results of the Campaign's success in Rhode Island, new information about 2005 National Stop On Red Week and a review of all pending state red light and speed limit photo enforcement legislation.*

## Rhode Island Approves Statewide Camera Bill

Rhode Island has become the newest state to formally approve the use of red light cameras. Statewide enabling legislation for red light cameras became law on July 19th.

Identical bills were introduced earlier this year in the House and Senate to build upon last year's last-minute effort to only allow the City of Providence to use red light cameras.

At the initial series of hearings, Campaign Communications Director Jeff Agnew and a Rhode Island red light running crash survivor advocate testified in support of the legislation, along with representatives from several city governments, law enforcement agencies and the Rhode Island chapter of the Sierra Club.

After reviewing the legislation for several months, a key House committee finally approved HB 6315 to be heard before the full House on June 29th.

The legislation passed the House, but language was removed that would have allowed the use of photo radar (speed cameras.) The Senate approved the legislation on June 30th.

The legislation allows municipalities in Rhode Island to establish red light camera programs. The state department of transportation will be responsible for approving the technologies that can be used and must approve any camera location regardless of whether or not it is located at the intersection of a state-owned road. The law also has a three-year sunset clause which will have to be addressed in future sessions.

Signage will be required at every intersection where cameras are used and the registered owner of the vehicle will be held responsible for violations. It is up to each municipality to determine the fine amount for violations.

*(continued on page 2)*

# 2005 Stop On Red Week Approaching Fast

Preparations are well underway for a series of events and outreach activities to draw more attention to 2005 National Stop On Red Week.

The National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running will again be partnering with Major League Baseballs teams including the Los Angeles Angels of Anaheim and the Arizona Diamondbacks to hold "Stop On Red Night at the Ballpark" events as well as producing the popular "Get Home Safe" posters featuring players from each partner team.

In addition, the Empire State Building will once again be honoring National Stop On Red Week by illuminating the top levels of the famous New York City landmark in the green, yellow and red pattern of a traffic signal on the evening of September 1st.

A number of local and state traffic safety, law enforcement and community groups will also be hosting special events and awareness activities.

Here are a few examples from 2004:  
The fleet of Goodyear Blimps ran "Stop On Red Week" messages on their lightboards.

The Sacramento County Sheriff's Department handed out 2004 "Get Home Safe" posters at their booth at the California State Fair.

The Florida Highway Patrol, Louisiana State Police and Purdue University police all conducted enforcement crackdowns on red light running.

Members of the American Trauma Society – Maryland Division and the Prince George's and Montgomery County fire departments urged parents and motorists to make traffic and pedestrian safety a top priority as students return to school.

Traffic safety groups in Pennsylvania, Michigan and Washington, DC, all issued press releases promoting National Stop On Red Week.

**2005  
NATIONAL  
STOP ON RED  
WEEK  
AUG. 27 - SEPT. 2**

[www.stopredlightrunning.com](http://www.stopredlightrunning.com)



## How To Promote 2005 National Stop On Red Week In Your Community

- Urge your local police to conduct red light running enforcement sweeps and hold a press conference to announce the results.
  - If your city has red light cameras near school zones, ask the city if school children could paint designs on the camera poles.
  - Ask local banks or businesses with scrolling message lightboards to display Stop on Red Week safety messages.
  - Urge TV and radio stations to reinforce the national and local human and financial cost of red light running crashes.
- Call the Campaign at **202-828-9100** for more outreach ideas.

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A 2003 study by the University of Rhode Island found that red light running is a frequent occurrence. According to this data, on average, someone can be expected to run a red light every 9.5 minutes at any given intersection in Rhode Island, with some intersections having a red light runner every 4 minutes.

Rhode Island and Washington have both approved red light camera enabling legislation in the 2005 legislative season.

Elsewhere, attempts to outlaw red light cameras in Texas were defeated in the regular legislative session, but an anti-camera amendment has been added to legislation under review in a special session. A red light camera prohibition bill is under review in the Ohio State Senate.

# Virginia Speaker Says Politics Killed Cameras

William J. Howell, the Speaker of the Virginia House of Delegates, recently became one of the first Virginia state officials to publicly discuss the expiration of the law allowing Virginia communities to use red light cameras.

Howell made the remarks at a June 28th luncheon meeting of the Washington Area State Relations Group held at the National Press Club in Washington, DC.

National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running Executive Director Leslie Blakey asked Howell how he could explain the House's vote to approve the use of photo enforcement at state tollbooths where there is no threat to public safety, but refused to extend the law authorizing safety cameras to crack down on red light runners.

Howell replied that he had no explanation for the apparent contradiction and that the red light camera law ran afoul of political infighting between Republicans in the House and the Senate.

He also said that the red light camera legislation was rejected for mostly political, rather than policy reasons.

Howell jokingly remarked that Virginians are slow to change and that if the installation of cameras at tollbooths has a successful run, the House of Delegates might be more willing

## Falls Church Gets Creative

The City of Falls Church, VA has decided to keep most aspects of their red light camera system in place after the law's sunset on July 1st.

The city, which used a video-based camera system to enforce red lights, will still use embedded sensors to hold intersection traffic approaching from other directions when a vehicle is detected running a red light. While it will not increase enforcement of red light running, the city said it is at least one potential safety benefit they will retain.

City leaders intend to urge the state to restore the camera law in 2006.

to accept red light cameras at intersections in the future.

The Speaker did indicate however, that if any sunset extension bill had made it before the full House it would have likely passed, although the vote might have been close.

Howell suggested that because red light cameras were only used by Northern Virginia municipalities and Virginia Beach, that the mostly rural House legislators were not swayed by the requests of those communities to extend the law.

## NOTABLE QUOTES

**“We’ll never be able to effectively cover an intersection like the cameras did.”**

-Sgt. Jamie Bartlett, commander of the Alexandria, VA police traffic division, quoted in a Washington Post story on the sunset of the Virginia red light camera law.

**“We’re going to miss the cameras. They were specifically placed in areas that were difficult to enforce and where we saw the most accidents.”**

-Arlington County, VA Police Capt. Bonnie Regan, commander of the special operations section, quoted in the same article.

# Fourth of July Fatal Crashes Match 2004 Toll

## *Red Light Running Injury Crashes Drop Slightly*

Red light running crashes over the 2005 Fourth of July holiday weekend proved to be just as deadly as last year, despite record numbers of cities using automated traffic enforcement technology and numerous state and regional targeted enforcement efforts.

A thorough review of national news articles posted during and after the holiday weekend showed that six people were fatally injured and 12 sustained serious injuries in red light running crashes. Unfortunately, half of the fatalities and a third of the injuries occurred in one particularly catastrophic crash in southeastern Ohio when an SUV ran a light and struck a car.

In 2004, there were also six people killed, but 18 people were seriously injured. Last year, almost all of the fatalities were the drivers who ran the red light, but this year all those killed were in the vehicles that were hit.

“The Fourth of July weekend is one that we all look forward to, but drivers must stay focused on and pay attention to traffic lights,” said

## Mississippi River Cities Focusing On Cameras

Several Mississippi River Valley cities have become the latest to approve and develop the use of automated enforcement cameras to crack down on red light runners.

Minneapolis, Minnesota has just activated a city-wide network of red light cameras to augment their traffic enforcement efforts.

Arnold, Missouri, just south of St. Louis, has become the first city in the "Show-Me" State to approve a city resolution that would allow red light cameras under home rule.

In another home rule development, the Memphis, Tennessee City Council has just approved a resolution that will allow an unspecified number

Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey. "For the second year in a row, this holiday weekend saw too many tragedies because drivers placed more value on their time than the safety of other drivers and pedestrians."

One new advantage this year for law enforcement is that there are now many more U.S. cities using automated enforcement cameras to crack down on red light runners. Cities with new red light camera programs include: Albuquerque, NM, Athens, GA, Dalton, GA, Davenport, IA, Frederick, MD, Middletown, OH, Minneapolis, MN, Modesto, CA, Oceanside, CA, Philadelphia, PA, Sioux Falls, SD and Stallings, NC.

“Drivers who run red lights are finding out that in addition to the obvious public safety risk, they are now much more likely to be held accountable for their actions,” Blakey said.

### **DID YOU KNOW?**

**One-third of drivers admitted running a red light or driving through as the light was changing from yellow to red in the past six months.**

*Source: 2005 Drive For Life poll*

of red light cameras. The Memphis suburb of Germantown is the only Tennessee city that currently has red light cameras.

Davenport, Iowa, which started a program last year, was the first Iowa city to develop red light cameras. A second program in Council Bluffs in the western part of the state has recently started operating.

“We applaud the efforts of these cities in exploring the use of automated traffic enforcement systems in order to create safer roads,” said Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey. “These communities are helping to lead the way in developing progressive traffic safety initiatives that can make a real difference.”

# Legislative Update — July 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**

**Connecticut:** HB 5744 (Judiciary Committee) would authorize speed and red light cameras in Connecticut municipalities. The bill was approved by four different House committees, but was not given a vote by the 6/8/05 end of session deadline.

**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 4/13/05. Referred to Senate Transportation Committee, where it died at the end of the legislative session.

**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 which is in recess until September.

**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.

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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.