

# SAFETY FOCUS

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*This issue focuses on the latest developments in Ohio, the formation of a new anti-red light running grassroots group, a disturbing red light running trend in Florida and a review of all red light and speed limit enforcement camera legislation.*

## Ohio Trauma Group Joins Effort To Save Cameras

A prominent Ohio medical association has formally joined the legislative effort being coordinated by the National Campaign to Stop Red Light Running, law enforcement and municipalities across Ohio in advocating for the defeat of House Bill 56, which would effectively ban the use of red light and speed limit enforcement cameras.

The Ohio Committee on Trauma, which represents 42 trauma facilities in the state, recently released a public statement expressing their opposition to the bill. The organization expressed its concern that red light running deaths and injuries would increase if Ohio communities were prohibited from using the technology.

"After a careful review of the available medical and traffic safety data available the Ohio Committee on Trauma has reached the conclusion that automated red-light cameras offer an opportunity to reduce injuries and mortality from vehicular collisions...published, objective, peer reviewed data regarding the use of automated devices clearly suggests a statistically significant reduction of intersection crashes were these devices are employed."

A representative of the organization testified against the latest Senate version of the bill at a March 14th hearing in the Senate Committee on Highways and Transportation.

A few days before the latest hearing, the Senate committee chairman released a new set of provisions to the original House bill. Unfortunately, the new provisions, if enacted, would have been just as restrictive to photo enforcement as the original legislation.

*(continued on page 2)*

## New Study Documents AZ Camera Benefits

Arizona State University researchers recently analyzed the Scottsdale, AZ red light camera program.

Data reviewed from 14 red light camera intersections found that right angle and left-turn crashes decreased by 20 percent and 45 percent, respectively, with an overall decrease in total crashes of 11 percent. They also detected a positive spillover effect to nearby intersections.

The researchers concluded that red light cameras did decrease the occurrence of right-angle and left-turn crashes. They also determined that rear-end crash severity decreased as a result of red light cameras.

The researchers warned that only reviewing frequency of crashes is not enough to fully understand the impact of red light cameras on crash severity and reduced economic costs.

*(continued from page 1)*

The new provisions would have eliminated the requirement for an officer to be present, but would have prohibited any use of speed cameras, required police officers to establish driver liability, force cities to remove any camera at an intersection that did not see any crash reductions after two years of use, and only give the state department of transportation 30 days to develop operational criteria.

In addition to the trauma organization, the new provisions were publicly opposed by the Campaign, the Ohio Municipal League, several red light running survivor advocates and most of the cities that currently use the technology.

Several prominent Ohio newspapers including; *The Toledo Blade*, *The Cleveland Plain Dealer*, *The Akron Beacon Journal* and *The Columbus Dispatch* all reaffirmed their opposition to the state legislature's actions.

## Clock Runs Out On Georgia Camera Bill

Georgia safety camera legislation that was unexpectedly changed at the last minute will have to wait until next year.

Georgia safety advocates had been working to pass legislation to allow speed cameras in school zones since early in 2005.

The legislation passed the House, but with only days left in the session, the Senate amended the bill to include a provision which could have ended the use of all photo enforcement systems in the state.

The amendment stated that all revenue from Georgia's camera programs would have to be deposited into a state medical fund, but did not include language to allow cities to recover system operating costs.

The legislation died when the 2006 legislative session ended on March 31st.

As a result of the opposition to the new provisions, the chairman postponed a vote on the measure.

A new series of provision were released on March 29th. Most of the objectionable provisions have been eliminated or revised, but some unacceptable wording remains, and the coalition will continue to work to modify the legislation.

No further public hearings on the legislation are expected until May.

## Mark your calendars...

2006  
NATIONAL  
STOP ON RED  
WEEK  
AUG. 6th - 12th

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



## Careless Driver Attracts Global Media Attention

A British woman applying cosmetics with both hands while driving on a highway had her poor driving habits captured by a mobile speed camera van.

The minor incident quickly became a global news story, especially after the police released the camera images clearly showing the woman applying the makeup while steering with her knees.

A top North Wales police official said he couldn't imagine a more dangerous act than to take both hands off the wheel and apply makeup while driving.

The 22-year-old was fined the U.S. equivalent of \$340 dollars and given six points on her driver's license.

According to one regional safety group, 41 people have been injured or killed on the road where the recent incident occurred since 2001.

## Florida Safety Coalition Says "Enough Is Enough"

A new grassroots organization has formed in Florida with the goal of building support for state legislation that would finally allow Florida communities to use red light enforcement cameras.

The STOP! Red Light Running Coalition of Florida has brought together municipal and county governments, law enforcement, red light running survivor advocates, insurance organizations, businesses and several chambers of commerce who are united in the belief that red light running in Florida has reached epidemic levels. *(See Related Story On PAGE 4)*

The coalition's website includes an online petition form, information about the current state legislation, a summary of the growing number of "warning only" red light camera systems being operated to demonstrate the scope of the problem and a special section dedicated to telling the stories of people killed by red light runners.

Melissa Wandall, the red light running survivor advocate who lost her husband to a red light running crash a few weeks before she gave birth to their first child, is serving as the organization's president. The House and Senate state bills are named in honor of her husband.

The Campaign, which has worked with many of the individuals and organizations in the coalition in the past, was quick to sign on to the coalition's online petition to help demonstrate its ongoing support.

The coalition's excellent website can be viewed at <http://www.orgsites.com/fl/floridastops/>

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## NOTABLE QUOTE

"We've all seen it. The light turns red, yet two, three, sometimes half a dozen cars continue through the intersection. With roads increasingly congested, more and more frustrated drivers are running red lights. Even when traffic is light, some continue to plow through. Tampa police Detective Juan Serrano, Mayor Pam Iorio's bodyguard, was killed last Saturday by a driver who ran a red light. There is a solution for making intersections safer: Install cameras to photograph the license plates of red-light runners."

-- from a March 4th editorial in *The Tampa Tribune*

# Seven Florida Police Officers Hit By Red Light Runners Since January

Red light running crashes that injure law enforcement officers most often occur when police vehicles are driving through red lights while responding to emergencies or as a result of chasing down red light runners and fleeing vehicles.

However, the first few months of 2006 have already seen seven Florida police officers involved in red light running crashes when they were merely driving through an intersection in normal traffic conditions.

The most tragic crash occurred in Tampa on Feb. 25th when Detective Juan Serrano, who served as Mayor Pam Iorio's bodyguard and driver, was struck and killed by a vehicle that ran a light. The 35-year-old driver of the car that struck Serrano's vehicle fled the scene, but was later apprehended by police. Serrano's death featured prominently in a March 4th editorial in *The Tampa Tribune* which called on the state legislature to allow Florida communities to install red light cameras to help reduce red light running crashes and injuries.

On New Years Day, Ponce Inlet Police Chief Steven Thomas was seriously injured when a driver ran a red light and struck his motorcycle in a Daytona Beach crash.

On Jan. 16th, a Palm Bay police officer was struck in his vehicle by a driver in a pickup truck who ran a light. Two days later, Hernando County Sheriff's Deputy Mike Kistler was taken to Spring Hill Regional Hospital with non life-threatening injuries after a pickup truck ran a red light and crashed into his police cruiser. The driver and passenger of the pickup truck were taken

by air ambulance to Tampa General Hospital with serious injuries.

An unidentified Lauderhill police officer suffered minor injuries on March 6th when his police cruiser and another vehicle were struck by a car that witnesses said blew through a red light and drove right into the path of the other vehicles.

On March 13th, Officer Lonnie Bingnear of the Pinellas Park Police Department was injured in car crash while driving her marked patrol car south on 66th Street at Park Boulevard at 11:35 p.m. Police said a driver went through a red light and hit her cruiser. Two other cars were damaged, and one driver suffered minor injuries.

The most recent incident occurred in Vero Beach on March 21st when Vero Beach Police Sgt. William Offutt sustained minor injuries when his vehicle was struck by a 63-year old woman who police said drove through a flashing red light without stopping. The woman was in critical condition after being flown to Holmes Regional Medical Center in Melbourne.

Campaign Executive Director Leslie Blakey said that, "the fact that six Florida police officers have been injured and one killed in red light running crashes that had nothing to do with responding to emergency calls shows just how widespread red light running has become in Florida.

The state legislature needs to seriously consider Rep. Reagan's enabling legislation for red light cameras. There is no reason for Florida's law enforcement officers to be placed in unnecessary risk."



# Legislative Update — April 2006

*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 35 (Grimes) would enable municipalities to enforce red light offenses using automated detection devices. Referred to the Public Safety Committee on 1/10/06.

**Arizona:** HB 2174 (Gorman & Robson) would require that cities using automated enforcement technology display signs alerting drivers to the presence of the technology. The bill was read for the first time on 1/17/06 and referred to the Transportation Committee and the Rules Committee. The second reading took place on 1/18/06. The Transportation Committee approved the legislation on 1/26/06, the Rules Committee approved it on 1/31/06. Approved by the full House by a vote of 44-13. Referred to the Senate Rules Committee and Senate Transportation Committee on 2/15/06. Retained by the Committee of the Whole on 3/23/06.

HB 2180 (Biggs) would enact a series of provisions for the use of automated enforcement technology, including a set of conditions for the use of automated enforcement technology on state property. The bill was read first on 1/17/06 and referred to the Transportation Committee and the Rules Committee. Passed the Transportation Committee on 2/16/06 and the Rules Committee on 2/16/06. Ordered held by the Majority Caucus on 2/21/06.

HB 2612 (Biggs) would levy a \$200 processing fee on any state agency requesting a motor vehicle record for the purpose of issuing a photo enforcement citation. The bill was read for the first time 1/23/06 and referred to the Transportation Committee and the Rules Committee. Second reading took place on 1/24/06. Ordered held by the committee on 2/16/06.

**Connecticut:** HB 5210 (Judiciary Committee) would enable municipalities to enforce red light and speeding offenses using automated enforcement technology. The bill was referred to the Judiciary Committee on 2/16/06. Rejected by a vote of 22-16 on 3/13/06.

**Florida:** HB 259 (Reagan), known as the Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act, would enable municipalities to enforce red light offenses using automated enforcement technology. The bill was filed on 10/17/05. It was referred to the Local Governments Council on 12/23/05.

**Hawaii:** HB 1812 (Souki) would establish red light camera programs at the county level in Hawaii. Referred to the Finance, Judiciary and Transportation committees and approved with amendments by the Transportation Committee on 2/6/06. Referred to the Judiciary Committee. No further action taken.

**Illinois:** SB 2405 (Cullerton) would allow communities in eight specific counties to use red light cameras. Introduced on 1/18/06. Referred to the Transportation Committee. Approved by the Committee on 2/15/06. Passed as amended by the Senate 33-22 on 3/2/06. Referred to the House Rules Committee on 3/2/06.

**Maryland:** HB 0083 (Smigiel) would prohibit the use of red light cameras. Referred to the Environmental Matters Committee. Unfavorable report filed by the committee on 3/8/06.

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

**Missouri:** SB 719 (Crowell) would prohibit political subdivisions from adopting ordinances or regulations that authorize the use of photo radar or automated traffic control systems to enforce traffic laws. Referred to Judiciary and Civil & Criminal Jurisprudence Committee. Amended to allow photo enforcement, but only with a flat-fee contract.

# Legislative Update — April 2006

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**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. Senate hearings have been held on 10/18/05, 11/02/05 and 3/14/06.

**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.

## **SPEEDING SAFETY CAMERAS**

**Arizona:** HB 2245 (Gorman) would impose numerous restrictions on photo radar, including calibration requirements, inability to revoke driver licenses and time requirements for violations to be served. Referred to the House Transportation Committee on 1/19/06.

HB 2722 (Gorman) would require all funds from freeway photo radar systems to be deposited in the state fund to pay for highway patrol costs. Referred to the House Transportation Committee on 1/19/06. Ordered held by the committee on 2/16/06.

SB 1146 (Verschoor) would prohibit the use of photo radar on controlled access highways. Referred to Senate Transportation Committee. Approved on 1/25/06. Transmitted to Senate Rules Committee on 1/30/06. Approved by the Senate Transportation Committee and sent to the full Senate where it was approved in a vote of 17-11 on 2/16/06. Referred to the House Judiciary and Rules Committees. Approved by the Judiciary Committee on 3/30/06.

SB 1473 (Martin) would require photo radar violations on controlled-access highway to be observed by a law enforcement officer. Read for the first time 1/31/06, and second reading was on 2/01/06. Referred to the Rules and Transportation Committees. Rejected by the Rules Committee by a vote of 4-1 on 2/14/06.

SB 1507 (Martin) would prohibit the use of photo radar on controlled-access highways. The bill was read for the first time 1/31/06. Referred to Senate Transportation Committee. Rejected by The Transportation Committee by a vote of 4-1 on 2/14/06.

**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 to Senate Transportation and Housing Committee on 1/4/06.

**Georgia:** HB 294 (Miller ) would allow the use of photo radar in school zones. The bill was filed on 1/11/06 and referred to the House Roads and Transportation Committee and amended to fully prohibit their use. It was approved by the full House on 2/10/06. Referred to the Senate, where it passed on 3/10/06. The bill died when the legislative session adjourned on 3/31/06.

**West Virginia:** HB 4004 (Swartzmiller) would prohibit the use of photo radar. The bill was filed on 1/11/06 and referred to the House Roads and Transportation Committee and amended to fully prohibit the use of all photo enforcement technology. It was approved by the full House on 2/10/06. Referred to the Senate, where it passed on 3/10/06. It was signed into law by the Governor on 3/30/06.

## **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](mailto:info@stopredlightrunning.com) or call 202-828-9100.