



SILVER SPRING CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

May 12, 2009

Mr. Isiah Leggett
County Executive
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Mr. Phil Andrews
Council President
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Messrs. Leggett and Andrews:

We are writing to support Bill 35-08, and to make suggestions for improvement. This bill proposes to dedicate revenue from speed cameras to the pedestrian safety initiative and other public safety purposes.

We begin by continuing our endorsement of the speed camera program. Two years ago, we evaluated the program and viewed how it would work firsthand. We addressed concerns about revenue, appeal process, effectiveness, and privacy, and concluded that the benefits of enhanced public safety in this case outweighed the costs of automated enforcement. Thank you for implementing the program.

Since then, the speed camera program has been partially successful: it has reduced speeds, although it has not yet reduced the number of collisions. Also, although it has generated revenue, that money has been channeled into general funds and cannot be easily traced. The opacity of this revenue stream leads us to be concerned that the program needs improvement to comply with state law, which requires that revenue be used for specific public safety purposes.

One particularly important public safety issue in our area is pedestrian safety, and we welcome the proposal to create a dedicated revenue stream connecting speed cameras with a fully-funded pedestrian safety initiative. As you know, our region includes several high-incidence collision areas, and it would be fitting and just that revenue from speeding fines be used for pedestrian safety and police or fire department emergency responses.

We urge that the bill be amended so as to not favor municipalities in Montgomery County and to instead favor areas with more high-incidence areas. As an unincorporated

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region with more traffic, more cameras, and more collisions, we believe that the distribution of pedestrian safety funds should be based on these variables.

Thank you very much for considering our opinion and suggestions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'D. Unger', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Darian Unger
Chair

cc:

Councilmember Roger Berliner
Councilmember Marc Elrich
Councilmember Valerie Ervin
Councilmember Nancy Floreen
Councilmember Mike Knapp
Councilmember George Levanthal
Councilmember Duchy Trachtenberg