



3/18/2019

Senator Lee Beyer, Co-Chair
Representative Caddy McKeown, Co-Chair
Joint Committee on Transportation
900 Court Street, NE
Salem, OR 97301

RE: SUPPORT for SB 559 – Expands authority to operate fixed photo radar systems in high crash corridors to all cities. Make permanent authority to operate fixed photo radar systems in high crash corridors.

Dear Co-Chairs Beyer and McKeown and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding SB 559, which would authorize cities to operate fixed photo radar systems in high crash corridors and make permanent the authority to operate such systems.

Eugene is a Vision Zero City with the goal of eliminating deaths and life changing injuries on our transportation system by 2035. The State of Oregon shares the same goal of zero deaths or life changing injuries by 2035 through the Transportation Safety Action Plan adopted by the Oregon Transportation Commission in 2016.

A few of the key principles of the Vision Zero approach to transportation safety are to design our streets so that the outcomes of people making mistakes are less severe, that we design streets and set speed limits with the trauma a human body can withstand in mind, we use data to inform our decision making and agency transportation professionals are accountable for managing their transportation systems to meet desired safety outcomes.

We know that speed is a critical factor in whether a crash occurs and how severe the outcomes of a crash are. The graphic below illustrates how small differences in speed exponentially increase the chance of death and life changing injuries for vulnerable users such as people walking, biking or using a mobility device.



Source: Tefft, Brian C. Impact speed and a pedestrian's risk of severe injury or death. Accident Analysis & Prevention. 50. 2013

The city has a goal of redesigning streets with lower design speeds and using elements like travel lane width, street trees, traffic calming, medians, and traffic signal timing to encourage appropriate speeds by people driving motor vehicles. However, we recognize that enforcement also plays a key role in ensuring that vehicles travel at safe speeds.

Fixed photo radar systems, also known as speed cameras or automated speed enforcement, have been shown to lower traffic speeds and reduce the likelihood that crashes lead to fatalities or incapacitating injuries. These devices can operate in locations and under conditions that would make traffic stops dangerous or impractical. The National Transportation Safety Board has concluded that automated speed enforcement is an effective countermeasure to reduce speeding-related crashes, fatalities and injuries.

HB 2409, passed by the legislature in 2017, enables cities to issue speed citations from the same camera and sensor systems used to enforce red light compliance at intersections. However, these locations are not necessarily the best locations for speed cameras and there could be drawbacks to using red light cameras to also enforce speed limits.

SB 558 is also in alignment with the 2016 Oregon Transportation Safety Action Plan Action 6.3.4 “Modify laws to allow more effective automated enforcement of traffic law.” If this legislation becomes law, the city intends to install speed cameras on high crash corridors identified through our Vision Zero Action Plan process.

One concern that we have with SSB as proposed is that it requires cities to select sections of roadway for automated enforcement where the rate of fatalities or serious injuries is at least 25 percent higher than the rate on similar roadways for the 10-year period immediately preceding the date of starting to operate the photo radar. This is not feasible as there is a lag of up to two years from when crashes happen until cities receive crash data from ODOT. We suggest an alternative approach where cities can use automated speed enforcement on segments of roadway that have been identified through an individual city’s Transportation Safety Action Plan.

In closing, again, Eugene thanks you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of SB 559 and asks that you provide a ‘Do Pass’ recommendation for this bill.

Sincerely,

Rob Inerfeld, AICP
Transportation Planning Manager
City of Eugene
Phone: 541-682-5343
Email: rinerfeld@eugene-or.gov