



Testimony to the Senate Local Government Committee
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Chairman O'Brien, Vice-Chair Gavarone, Ranking-Member Smith, ladies and gentlemen of the Senate Local Government Committee, thank you for giving me the opportunity to speak regarding SB 340. The Ohio Bicycle Federation is not supportive of the legislation as written.

Our concern is that we don't know of other traffic control devices that require voters to approve them. Other changes in traffic controls are suggested by traffic engineers with support from law enforcement, and are voted by city council, with the opportunity for residents to comment at hearings. What next? Will voters have to approve pedestrian beacons or roundabouts, that engineers have determined will make our streets safer?

The other concern is why is local funding cut for cities that implement camera programs? We don't cut local funding for cities that collect traffic fines that are due to police officers writing tickets. There are some cities that Senator Patton would call "speed traps" that have police officers present at the lower speed locations.

Other benefits are that speed and red light cameras do not "racial profile", which has been a criticism of some new laws (including the Distracted Driving law). Also, ticketing via camera avoids dangers to police officers making traffic stops, the motorists being stopped and other drivers needing to move over for traffic stops.

Studies from Seattle, WA, which implemented speed cameras in school zones, determined that the motorists who were ticketed did not offend again.

Senator Patton told a story of a constituent who was ticketed by a speed camera, while driving from his home to a kiddy park via a town which utilized cameras. The constituent was upset because he got 2 tickets, one going and one coming. That guy with his grandkids in his car, ought to be obeying the speed limit, and he likely obeyed the speed limit next time he drove through. These cameras work, as Columbus noted with a 28% decrease in fatal and injury right angle crashes at camera monitored intersections.

We spoke with a local law enforcement officer who suggests that there should be much more oversight by the county sheriff, including managing the cameras, obtaining county commissioner approval, choice of vendor, locations of cameras (high crash locations) and traffic fine distribution policies.

We like that the bill removes the language that a police officer must be present, but don't agree with the voter approval or the cut in local funding. We hope that this bill will be amended before being passed by the Senate Local Government Committee.