
Transportation Committee

HB 2780

Brief Description: Concerning automated traffic safety cameras.

Sponsors: Representatives Hurst, Williams and Simpson.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Modifies the process by which a registered owner may challenge an infraction generated by an automated traffic safety camera to limit a court's ability to require further action when a registered owner states that the vehicle was controlled by another individual at the time the infraction occurred.
- Requires the yellow light duration to be at least four seconds at intersections where automated traffic safety cameras are installed.
- Limits the fine for an infraction generated by an automated traffic safety camera to \$25.

Hearing Date: 1/27/10

Staff: David Munnecke (786-7315).

Background:

Local governments are authorized to use automated traffic safety cameras subject to the following conditions:

- an ordinance must first be enacted by the local legislative authority allowing their use to detect only stoplight, railroad crossing, or school speed zone violations, and setting forth public notice and signage provisions;
- use of the automated traffic safety cameras is restricted to two-arterial intersections, railroad crossings, and school speed zones only, except in the case of on-going pilot projects involving the use of automated traffic safety cameras to detect speed violations and work zone safety violations;
- pictures may only be taken of vehicles and vehicle license plates while an infraction is occurring, and must not reveal driver or passenger faces;

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- all locations where a camera is used must be clearly marked by signs indicating the presence of a camera zone;
- infraction notices must be mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle within 14 days of the infraction, and may be responded to by mail;
- the compensation paid to the manufacturer or vendor of the equipment must be based only on the value of the equipment and services rendered and not upon a portion of the fines or revenue; and
- infractions detected through the use of cameras are not part of the registered owner's driving record.

Infractions detected through the use of cameras must be processed in the same manner as parking infractions, and the fine associated with an infraction may not exceed the amount of a fine issued for other parking infractions within the jurisdiction. The registered owner of a vehicle is responsible for an infraction detected by an automated traffic safety camera unless the owner states under oath that the vehicle involved was, at the time, stolen or in the care, custody, or control of another person.

Summary of Bill:

If a registered owner declares under oath that an infraction generated by an automated traffic safety camera occurred while the vehicle was controlled by another individual, an order dismissing the the infraction must be entered by the court, notice of the dismissal must be sent to the registered owner, and no further hearings or actions can be required of the registered owner. The registered owner cannot be required to provide further information beyond the fact that the registered owner was not operating the vehicle at the time the alleged infraction occurred, and a court or jurisdiction may not summon, harass, or intimidate any person into paying a monetary penalty when the registered owner was not operating the vehicle at the time of the alleged infraction.

The yellow light duration is required to be at least four seconds at any intersection where an automated traffic safety cameras is installed. The fine for any infraction generated by an automated traffic safety camera is limited to \$25.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Requested on 1/21/2010.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect on July 1, 2010.