

SENATE BILL REPORT

SB 5678

As of February 20, 2013

Title: An act relating to clarifying the use of automated traffic safety cameras at intersections with two or more arterial highways.

Brief Description: Clarifying the use of automated traffic safety cameras at intersections with two or more arterial highways.

Sponsors: Senators Frockt and Darneille.

Brief History:

Committee Activity: Transportation: 2/19/13.

SENATE COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

Staff: Kelly Simpson (786-7403)

Background: Under current law, local governments may use automated traffic safety cameras to detect stoplight, railroad crossing, or school speed-zone violations. Use of the cameras is restricted to two arterial intersections, railroad crossings, and school speed-zones. The cameras may only take pictures of the vehicle and vehicle's license plate while an infraction is occurring, and must not reveal the face of the driver or passengers. Infractions detected through the use of cameras are not part of the registered owner's driving record.

The fine issued for a stoplight violation that is detected through the use of an automated traffic safety camera may not exceed the monetary penalty for a violation of the requirement to follow official traffic control devices – currently \$124.

Summary of Bill: The use of automated traffic safety cameras is expanded to include locations at intersections of two or more arterials.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Committee/Commission/Task Force Created: No.

Effective Date: Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.

This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.

Staff Summary of Public Testimony: PRO: Some larger intersections in Seattle are good candidates for this bill, and are intersections that are prone to many accidents. This bill would help with the safety of a multitude of drivers. It provides local options – the bill does not mandate traffic cameras. A location in Seattle with three arterials intersecting previously had a camera detecting stoplight violations. However, it was removed after current law was clarified to the jurisdiction. In the time the intersection had a camera, accident rates were significantly reduced, from 34 to three during equally proportional timeframes. Serious t-bone accidents were also reduced from eight to zero during equally proportional timeframes. Red light cameras are very effective in reducing traffic accidents.

Persons Testifying: PRO: Senator Frockt, prime sponsor; Eric Sano, Greg Doss, Jim Morgan, Seattle Police Dept.