

I support HB 533 (photo speed monitoring devices) because I see it as a critical piece for controlling speed in places like Norfolk, VA.

Here in Norfolk, we are a city that is 95% built out, and we have the 3rd highest number of pedestrian deaths in the state. As well, 12% of households do not have automobiles.

We have multiple waterways, tributaries, and creeks in Norfolk. Therefore, the north-south and east-west travel throughfares are squeezed into just a few busy corridors. These same roadways pass through areas with high concentrations of pedestrians. For example, east-west Little Creek Road, is high pedestrian nearly the whole 6.5 miles. Other corridors, like north-south Hampton Blvd and east-west Brambleton, pass directly through the heart of university campuses, Old Dominion and Norfolk State respectively. In these corridors, my observation is that drivers who are in a hurry to get across the city are apt to treat the corridor as a highway of sorts since it is taking them across town. There is little change of behavior when drivers approach the high pedestrian sections based on my observations. The heatmaps showing the crash data in Norfolk also show pedestrians are hit in areas where there is a high concentration of pedestrians.

When I am a pedestrian in the high pedestrian areas, what I see is the lead time for getting out of the way of a speeding automobile is much less than in other areas. For example, there are a lot more parked cars, buildings, powerline poles, turns in the roadway than there are in suburbs and rural areas. So, if I go to cross a street, the effect of vehicle “coming out of nowhere” is very real since sightlines are much more reduced. A speeding vehicle in these areas is highly dangerous to more vulnerable road users like pedestrians, bicycle riders, and wheelchair users.

I support giving localities the ability to run speed cameras in high pedestrian areas. We have so many areas in Norfolk that could benefit from this type of enforcement: Little Creek Rd corridor, Granby corridor, both East and West Ocean View Avenue, Downtown, Ghent, Hampton Blvd corridor, Military Circle region, Ghent, Berkley, Five Points to name a few.

Thank you,

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