

**Testimony of Rina Cutler,
Deputy Mayor for Transportation and Utilities, City of Philadelphia**

Senate Bill 1211 – Automated Speed Enforcement

Before the Senate Transportation Committee,
Hon. John C. Rafferty, Jr., Chair
Hon. John N. Wozniak, Democratic Chair

April 21, 2014

Chairman Rafferty and members of the Transportation Committee, my name is Rina Cutler, Deputy Mayor for Transportation and Utilities for the City of Philadelphia. Thank you for holding a hearing for Senate Bill 1211, which will allow for automated speed enforcement and welcome back to Philadelphia.

The first responsibility of any DOT - whether City, State or Federal - is safety. We need to implement innovative and aggressive strategies to reduce speeds. Often, our streets were designed to speed cars through City streets. These roadways have always presented the greatest safety challenges. It is unrealistic to believe we can have a police officer on every corner. We need to be able to slow people down. In 2008, there were 35 communities using automatic speed enforcement cameras in the US. In 2012, that number has jumped to 125 communities. There has been a good deal of research and experience accumulated in that time.

My testimony today will focus on the impacts of speeding on a large segment of our population - pedestrians. This should concern all of us, since at some point nearly every day we are all pedestrians. Whether we drive, ride transit or bike as our primary mode of transportation, most trips at least begin and end with walking. On average, every five hours a pedestrian is hit by a car in Philadelphia. In the last six years we've made progress in

reducing the number of pedestrian involved accidents, with the number of accidents falling by 10% between 2007 and 2012. We must use every tool available to protect the lives of our citizens. Automated speed enforcement is a tool Philadelphia should have available.

Speed kills. It is that simple. At 30 miles per hour a car travels about 44 feet every second. A glance away from the road and driver can miss the first glimpse of a pedestrian crossing the street. Even on a clear dry day the difference in the stopping distance between 30 and 35 miles per hour is an extra 21 feet, more than two car lengths. At 35 mph a driver is twice as likely to kill someone as they are at 30 mph. 97 percent of pedestrians hit by a car at 20 miles per hour will survive. At 35 miles per hour the survival rate drops to 50 percent and at 40 mph it plummets to just 10 percent. Drivers who exceed speed limits are more likely to be involved in crashes, injuring or killing themselves and others and damaging property. There is no excuse for driving in excess of 10 mph over the speed limit when the posted limit is less than 55 mph.

Automated speed enforcement has been found to reduce speeding and injuries. In Washington DC, at intersections where speed cameras are in use, the number of crashes and injuries has gone down by 20%. In 2007, Montgomery County Maryland implemented a automated speed enforcement program that had meaningful impacts. Vehicle speeds were measured approximately 6 months before and 6 months after speed cameras were deployed, and signs were installed warning of the speed enforcement program. Relative to comparison sites in Virginia, the proportion of drivers traveling more than 10 mph above posted speed limits declined by about 70 percent at Montgomery County locations with both warning signs and speed camera enforcement, 39 percent at locations with warning signs but no speed cameras, and 16 percent on residential streets with neither warning signs nor

speed cameras. The impact of cameras goes beyond their actual location to making the public generally more aware of speeding. It is our belief that these cameras will dramatically reduce the speed of vehicles and the number of crashes in Philadelphia.

It is important that the public recognize that the initiation of automatic speed enforcement is not an effort to raise revenue or to play gotcha, but is really about safety. No one leaves their home in the morning assuming they will not return. And yet, on our streets that happens more often than I want to think about. All of us need to remember the 145 driver, pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities that occurred in the City of Philadelphia in 2012 and to express our deep sorrow at that loss of life.

To this end, I believe that all revenue generated from this program, after administrative expenses, should be invested directed to traffic safety projects in the municipality where the infraction was committed. Our commitment needs to be to continually invest in safety.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today and I would be happy to answer questions.