

Metropolitan Transportation Commission and Association of Bay Area Governments
Joint MTC ABAG Legislation Committee

April 14, 2023

Agenda Item 3b

Assembly Bill 645 (Friedman): Speed Safety Pilot Program

Subject:

Revised version of legislation MTC supported in 2021 and 2022 (Assembly Bill (AB) 550 (Chiu, 2021) and AB 2336 (Friedman, 2022)) to authorize specified cities to implement five-year pilots to test speed safety cameras, under specific circumstances.

Overview:

AB 645, co-authored by Assembly Transportation Committee Chair Laura Friedman and Assemblymember Phil Ting, would authorize Speed Safety System pilot projects in the City and County of San Francisco and the cities of Oakland and San Jose in the Bay Area and the cities of Glendale, Los Angeles, and Long Beach in Southern California. Speed Safety System pilot projects would be limited to operation for five years or January 1, 2032, whichever is sooner.

The bill limits speed safety systems to the following locations:

- Safety corridors (those roadways designated by the local jurisdictions that have the highest number of serious injuries and fatalities), pursuant to AB 43 (Friedman, 2021)
- Streets where local authorities have determined there are a high number of speed contests or motor vehicle exhibitions of speed
- School zones

The bill would cap the number of systems that may be deployed in a given locality depending on its population, though numerical caps are not yet included in the legislation. It would also provide that if after 18 months a speed safety system does not result in *decreased* vehicle speeds and/or speed violations, the system must cease operations. Further, the bill would provide that a speed safety system may not be operated on any California state route, highway, interstate, or any other public road where the “California Highway Patrol has full responsibility and primary jurisdiction for the administration and enforcement of the laws.”

Recommendation:

Support / ABAG Executive Board Approval

Support / MTC Commission Approval

Discussion:

AB 645 is very similar to AB 2336 (Friedman, 2022) and AB 550 (Chiu, 2021), which MTC supported but which did not advance, due to being held in the Appropriations Committee. As noted in our memos on those bills, in a 2017 study, the National Transportation Safety Board found that speed safety cameras resulted in reduced speeding and the likelihood that a crash involved a severe injury or fatality and recommended *all states remove barriers to their use*. According to The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, a person struck by a vehicle going 23 miles per hour (mph) has a 10 percent chance of dying. That number goes up to 50 percent for vehicles going 42 mph, and 90 percent for vehicles going 58 mph. According to MTC's Vision Zero Action Plan, "reducing speed is a fundamental aspect of the Safe System approach and achieving Vision Zero." An international study cited by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found that the presence of automated speed enforcement reduced the share of vehicles traveling above the speed limit from 14 to 65 percent and reduced the risk of crashes resulting in injury or fatality from 11 to 44 percent. Speed safety cameras are currently in use in 150 communities across 16 different states but are still not allowed in California despite their proven track record of saving lives.

Privacy Protections Incorporated into Legislation

Any enforcement policy that involves cameras should have privacy protections built into it. Under AB 645, information collected under the program is restricted to being used only to administer the program itself. Additionally, a local jurisdiction participating in the pilot program must adopt a Speed Safety System Use Policy that clearly details the uses that are authorized and those that are prohibited. The bill further requires adoption of guidelines to ensure adherence to confidentiality requirements and prohibits the use of facial recognition technology.

Use of Violation Revenue

The bill requires that revenue generated from tickets issued as a result of the speed safety cameras be used to administer the program and pay for traffic calming measures. Cities are prohibited from using the revenue to backfill existing expenditures on traffic calming measures, and if traffic calming measures are not planned or constructed within three years, the remaining revenue must be sent to the state for the Active Transportation Program.

Equity Considerations

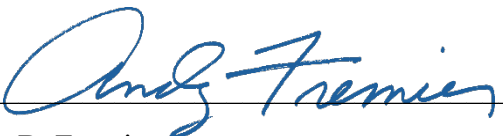
The bill requires that cities in the pilot program approve a Speed Safety System Impact Report prior to implementing the program to examine potential impacts in locations where the system may be deployed, with further analysis required for any locations in predominantly low-income neighborhoods. The bill requires cities to engage with stakeholder organizations including racial equity, privacy protection and economic justice groups, in development of the Impact Report. Lastly, the bill requires that cities participating in the program offer a “diversion program” whereby fines can be paid via a payment plan, the option to enroll in community service in lieu of payment and the establishment of reduced fines and penalties for low-income individuals. Consistent with MTC/ABAG’s 2023 Advocacy Program and Plan Bay Area 2050’s goal to advance the Regional Vision Zero Policy, staff recommends a support position on AB 645.

Known Positions:

No known positions.

Attachments:

- None



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