



ADVOCATES  
FOR HIGHWAY  
& AUTO SAFETY

May 5, 2025

The Honorable Ryan Bourriaque, Chair  
The Honorable Bryan Fontenot, Vice Chair  
Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works  
Louisiana House of Representatives  
900 North Third Street  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana 70804

Dear Chair Bourriaque and Vice Chair Fontenot:

Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety (Advocates), an alliance of consumer, safety, medical, public health and law enforcement groups and insurance companies working together to pass highway and auto safety laws that prevent crashes, save lives, reduce injuries, and contain costs, urges you to oppose Senate Bill (SB) 99. SB 99 prohibits the use of red light safety cameras and restricts speed safety cameras to school zones.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), 811 people lost their lives on Louisiana roads in 2023, a 12 percent increase since 2019, prior to the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> Speeding-related fatalities accounted for 30 percent (240) of the state's traffic fatalities in 2023 and have increased 155 percent since 2019.<sup>2</sup> If speeding-related fatalities remained at their 2019 level, there would have been 146 less fatalities in 2023. Fatalities among vulnerable road users (VRUs) rose as well; pedestrian fatalities increased 23 percent and bicyclist/other cyclist fatalities by 59 percent since 2019.<sup>3</sup>

In addition to the physical and emotional burden, traffic crashes exact a steep financial toll. In 2019, the estimated cost of traffic crashes in Louisiana was approximately \$6.6 billion, effectively imposing a \$1,413 "crash tax" on each Louisiana resident.<sup>4</sup> This amount was much higher than the national average (\$1,035) and is the eighth highest in the nation. When updated for inflation alone, in 2025, costs would equate to \$8.3 billion and \$1,783 respectively.<sup>5</sup> Clearly, traffic safety is a serious issue that urgently needs improvement rather than the dismantling of effective traffic safety countermeasures.

Speeding is a persistent contributing factor to crashes and fatalities. Small increases in speed cause serious declines in safety. Crash tests show that speed upticks of even five to ten miles-per-hour (mph) greatly escalate a driver's risk of injury or death.<sup>6</sup> Speed increases also immensely impact pedestrians and other VRUs. The average risk of death for a pedestrian is 10 percent at an impact speed of 23 mph, 25 percent at 32 mph, and 50 percent at 42 mph.<sup>7</sup> Further, drivers who speed have been shown to exhibit additional deadly driving behaviors; more than half (52 percent) of speeding passenger vehicle drivers in fatal crashes were unbuckled, compared to 22 percent of non-speeding drivers.<sup>8</sup>

Speed safety cameras are proven to deter speeding and its impact and are recommended for state and local adoption by the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), among others.<sup>9</sup> A study by the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS) found that speed safety cameras alone resulted in a 19 percent reduction in the likelihood that a crash caused a fatal or incapacitating injury.<sup>10</sup> Similarly, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) found

that speed and red light safety cameras reduce fatalities and injuries by 20-37 percent.<sup>11</sup> Limiting use of speed safety cameras will take away a proven safety tool and thereby elevate risk for road users.

Red light safety cameras show similar safety benefits. In 2022, 1,149 people were killed and more than 107,000 were injured in red light running crashes in the United States.<sup>12</sup> In fact, 25 percent of drivers admit to running a red light in the past 30 days<sup>13</sup> even though 83 percent of Americans believe that doing so is “very” or “extremely” dangerous.<sup>14</sup> Red light safety cameras are an effective tool to deter this behavior. According to the Journal of Safety Research, rates of fatal red light running crashes were 21 percent lower and all fatal crashes were 14 percent lower at signalized intersections in cities with camera programs.<sup>15</sup> Conversely, cities that took down their red light safety cameras experienced a 30 percent increase in deadly red light running crashes and a 16 percent increase in fatal crashes at signalized intersections overall.<sup>16</sup> This “spillover” effect, wherein people modify their driving habits to avoid running red lights at intersections with and without safety cameras, amplifies the benefits of such programs overall. The data are clear – red light safety cameras are successfully changing driver behavior and making intersections safer.

Law enforcement officers risk their lives when performing their duties on the roadways every day. Yet, it is implausible for them to be everywhere and catch every violation. Speed and red light safety cameras augment traditional enforcement without requiring a traffic stop.

In our 2025 *Roadmap to Safety* [report](#), Louisiana is one of only six states to receive our highest rating, based in part on its adoption of speed and red light safety cameras. The Pelican State should continue its traffic safety leadership instead of making roads more dangerous. We urge you to reject SB 99.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Catherine Chase  
President

cc: House Committee on Transportation, Highways and Public Works members

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- <sup>1</sup> State Traffic Safety Information for Louisiana, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
  - <sup>2</sup> State Traffic Safety Information for Louisiana, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
  - <sup>3</sup> State Traffic Safety Information for Louisiana, NHTSA, available at <https://cdan.dot.gov/STSI/stsi.htm>.
  - <sup>4</sup> The Economic and Societal Impact of Motor Vehicle Crashes, 2019 (Revised), National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), DOT HS 813 403, February 2023, available at: <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813403>.
  - <sup>5</sup> CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, Jan. 2019 to Jan. 2025, available at <https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl>.
  - <sup>6</sup> Impact of Speeds on Drivers and Vehicles – Results from Crash Tests, AAA Foundation for Safety, Humanetics, and IIHS, Jan. 2021, available at <https://www.iihs.org/api/datastoredocument/bibliography/2218>.
  - <sup>7</sup> Impact Speed and a Pedestrian’s Risk of Severe Injury or Death, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Sep. 2011., available at <https://aaafoundation.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/02/2011PedestrianRiskVsSpeedReport.pdf>.
  - <sup>8</sup> Traffic Safety Facts 2022 Data: Speeding, NHTSA, Jul. 2024, DOT HS 813582, available at <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813582>.
  - <sup>9</sup> Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles, NTSB, July 2017, SS-17-01, available at <https://www.nts.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf>.
  - <sup>10</sup> Effects of Automated Speed Enforcement in Montgomery County Maryland on Vehicle Speeds, Public Opinion and Crashes, IIHS, August; available at <https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2097>.
  - <sup>11</sup> Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide, Federal Highway Administration, January 2023, available [here](#).
  - <sup>12</sup> Red Light Running, IIHS, available at <https://www.iihs.org/topics/red-light-running#overview>.
  - <sup>13</sup> 2022 Traffic Safety Culture Index, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, November 2023, available at <https://newsroom.aaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/AAAFTS-TSCI-Technical-Report.pdf>.
  - <sup>14</sup> 2022 Traffic Safety Culture Index, AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, November 2023, available at

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- <sup>15</sup> <https://newsroom.aaa.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/AAAFST-TSCI-Technical-Report.pdf>.  
Effects of turning on and off red light cameras on fatal crashes in large U.S. cities, Journal of Safety Research, June 2017, available at <https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2121>.
- <sup>16</sup> Effects of turning on and off red light cameras on fatal crashes in large U.S. cities, Journal of Safety Research, June 2017, available at <https://www.iihs.org/topics/bibliography/ref/2121>.