ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
& AUTO SAFETY

March 11, 2026

The Honorable Mark Finchem, Chairman
The Honorable John Kavanagh, Vice-Chairman
Senate Judiciary and Elections Committee
Arizona Senate
1700 West Washington Street
Phoenix, Arizona 85007

Dear Chairman Finchem and Vice-Chairman Kavanagh:

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 House Concurrent Resolution (HCR) 2004. The measure prohibits the use of automated enforcement (AE) systems, an effective technology to deter speeding and red light running. While HCR 2004 grandfathers in state agencies and localities with an AE contract as of December 31, 2026, the bill requires localities to hold a referendum on AE and, if voters approve of AE, requires referendums every ten years in perpetuity to continue AE use.

In 2024, there were an overall estimated 1,250[1] traffic fatalities in Arizona according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), which is a 39 percent increase since 2015.[2] Speeding contributed to 34 percent of traffic fatalities in the state in 2024, and speeding related fatalities in Arizona were up 39 percent from 2015 to 2024.[3] During the same period fatalities among vulnerable road users (VRUs) increased as well with a 63 percent rise in pedestrian fatalities and a 52 percent uptick in bicyclist and other cyclists fatalities.[4] In 2023, 1,086 people were killed and more than 135,000 were injured in red light running crashes in the United States.[5] According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS), half of those killed were VRUs or people in other vehicles.[6] An analysis of four states without red light safety cameras found 3.2 violations per hour per intersection.[7]

In addition to the physical and emotional burden, traffic crashes exact a financial toll. In 2019, the estimated cost of traffic crashes in Arizona surpassed $5.9 billion, effectively imposing a $817 “crash tax” on all Arizona residents.[8] When updated for inflation alone, in 2026, costs would equate to approximately $7.7 billion.[9] Clearly, traffic safety is a serious issue that urgently needs improvement rather than the rolling back of an effective traffic safety countermeasure.

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.[10] 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.[11] 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.[12]

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.[13] Most states, including nearby California, Colorado and Utah, have state enabling legislation to permit speed safety cameras while New Mexico has speed safety cameras in use through local ordinances.[14] A study by the 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.[15] Similarly, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) found that AE reduces fatalities and injuries by 20-37 percent and is particularly effective in school and construction zones.[16] A study by Carnegie Mellon University of speed safety cameras in Philadelphia, PA found a 90 percent reduction in speeding and an approximately 50 percent decrease in crashes and injuries relative to the most similar arterials,

all arterials and local roads in Philadelphia.[17] Furthermore, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58) permits use of certain federal funds for AE programs in school and work zones.

Red light safety cameras show similar safety benefits, and 23 states, including nearby California, Colorado and New Mexico, permit red light safety cameras.[18] In fact, 25 percent of drivers admit to running a red light in the past 30 days[19] even though 83 percent of Americans believe that doing so is "very" or "extremely" dangerous.[20] 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.[21] 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.[22] 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, and it is implausible for law enforcement officers to be everywhere and catch every violation. AE augments traditional enforcement without requiring a traffic stop.

On average, over three people are killed every day as a result of traffic crashes in the state.[23] We urge you to reject HCR 2004. Instead, we encourage you to advance measures like House Bill 2417, which would create an intelligent speed assistance (ISA) program to protect road users and keep Arizona families whole and visitors safe. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase
President

cc: Senate Judiciary and Elections Committee members

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