ADVOCATES
FOR HIGHWAY
& AUTO SAFETY

April 9, 2026

The Honorable Brian Kemp
Governor of Georgia
Office of the Governor
206 Washington Street
Suite 203, State Capitol
Atlanta, Georgia 30334

Dear Governor Kemp:

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 veto House Bill (HB) 651. The measure would require localities to hold referendums to utilize automated speed enforcement (ASE), which Georgia already limits to school zones. Enactment may curtail use of an effective technology to deter speeding where vulnerable school children are present.

In 2025, there were an overall estimated 1,307 traffic fatalities in Georgia according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).[1] Speeding is a major factor in fatal crashes and contributed to 24 percent of Georgia traffic fatalities in 2024. Speeding related fatalities increased 26 percent from 2015 to 2024.[2] During the same period pedestrian fatalities rose by 47 percent.[3]

In addition to the physical and emotional burden, traffic crashes exact a financial toll. In 2019, the estimated cost of traffic crashes in the Peach State was approximately $18.7 billion, effectively imposing a $1,761 "crash tax," second highest of any state, on all residents and exceeding the national average of $1,035.[4] When updated for inflation alone, in 2026, costs would equate to about $24.2 billion.[5]

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.[6] Speed increases also immensely impact pedestrians and other vulnerable road users (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.[7]

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.[8] Most states, including neighboring Alabama, Florida, Tennessee and, as of 2025, North Carolina, permit speed safety cameras.[9] 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.[10] Similarly, the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT) found that ASE reduces fatalities and injuries by 20-37 percent and is particularly effective in school and construction zones.[11] A study by Carnegie Mellon University of ASE 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.[12] Furthermore, the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (Pub. L. 117-58) permits use of certain federal funds for ASE programs in school and work zones.

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. Speed safety cameras augment traditional enforcement without requiring a traffic stop.

With well over 1,000 annual traffic fatalities in Georgia, we respectfully urge you to reject HB 651 to protect precious school children, VRUs and motorists in school zones. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Catherine Chase, President

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[1] Traffic Safety Facts: Crash Stats, Early Estimate of Motor Vehicle Traffic Fatalities in 2025, NHTSA, April 2026, DOT HS 813 800, available at https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813800.

[2] State Traffic Safety Information for Georgia, NHTSA, available at https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm.

[3] State Traffic Safety Information for Georgia, NHTSA, available at https://cdan.dot.gov/stsi.htm.

[4] 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.

[5] CPI Inflation Calculator, BLS, Jan. 2019 to Jan. 2026, available at https://data.bls.gov/cgi-bin/cpicalc.pl.

[6] 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.

[7] 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.

[8] Reducing Speeding-Related Crashes Involving Passenger Vehicles, NTSB, July 2017, SS-17-01, available at https://www.ntsb.gov/safety/safety-studies/Documents/SS1701.pdf.

[9] Safety Camera Laws, IIHS, available at https://www.iihs.org/research-areas/red-light-running/safety-camera-laws.

[10] 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.

[11] Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide, Federal Highway Administration, January 2023, available at Speed Safety Camera Program Planning and Operations Guide.

[12] Evaluating the Effectiveness of Urban Speed Cameras on Traffic Safety in a Period of Dramatic Change, Carnegie Mellon University, July 2024, available at https://ppms.cit.cmu.edu/media/project_files/Guerra_Erick_420.pdf.