



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
MARTIN J. WALSH

October 2, 2019

Senator Joseph A. Boncore
Chair, Joint Committee Transportation
State House, Room 112
Boston, MA 02133

Representative William M. Straus
Chair, Joint Committee on Transportation
State House, Room 134
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Boncore, Chairman Straus and members of the Committee,

I write to you today to express my support of *H.2971/S.2045, An Act concerning photo enforcement of certain traffic violations* by Representative Biele and Senator Collins. This bill would allow municipalities to use photo enforcement for two specific purposes. One, for people who run the stop signs on school buses and the second for people who “block the box” at intersections.

Eliminating fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways is my top transportation priority. Some of our most vulnerable road users are our youth and too often, drivers run the stop sign that swings out from the side of a school bus when they pull over to pick up or drop off students. The National Association of State Directors of Pupil Transportation Services (NASDPTS) estimates that 14 million stop-arm violations occur during an average 180-day school year. 21 other states have already passed school bus stop arm camera laws, including five more this year: Indiana, Maine, New York, Oklahoma and Tennessee. I encourage Massachusetts to do the same in order to protect our children on the way to and from school.

Additionally, some of our most critical corridors get congested as drivers pull out into intersections and stay there after the light has changed, blocking traffic from moving in the other direction. This not only delays commutes but also increases pollution, with cars idling, and decreasing safety, as crosswalks are often blocked. Enforcement deters this behavior and keeps gridlock from happening, but it is unrealistic to have enforcement during every commute on every key corridor. This bill gives us the authority to explore photo enforcement for “don’t block the box.” I want to underscore that this photo enforcement bill is narrowly drafted, targeted to two specific issues mentioned above and also underscores the importance of privacy in the implementation of photo enforcement.

I respectfully request that you promptly and favorably report this bill out of committee as I believe it will reduce crashes, reduce gridlock and make our streets even better places to be. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me directly or you may contact Yissel Guerrero in the Office of Intergovernmental Relations at (617) 635-3817.

Sincerely,

Martin J. Walsh
Mayor of Boston

BOSTON CITY HALL • ONE CITY HALL SQUARE • BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS • 02201
617-635-4500 • boston.gov





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