



# Health Department

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March 18, 2021

Joint Committee on Transportation  
900 Court St. NE - Remote F  
Salem, Oregon 97301

Re: HB 2530 - Relating to use of photo radar on urban crash corridors

Co-Chairs Beyer and McLain, Co-Vice Chairs Boquist and Noble, and members of the Committee, my name is Andrea Hamberg and I am the Interim Environmental Health Director for Multnomah County Health Department. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB2530.

Unintentional injuries, including traffic crash injuries, are the third leading cause of death in Multnomah County and the leading cause of death for people ages 1 to 45.<sup>1</sup> Traffic crashes took the lives of nearly 80 people in Multnomah County last year, and for each fatal crash, there were many life-altering injuries. The people who died were our family, friends, neighbors, and beloved members of our community.

Alarming, we see patterns of injustice in these deaths. A County report published earlier this year revealed a disproportionate impact on black residents, finding a death rate from traffic crash deaths among this group that was nearly twice the rate among non-Hispanic white residents. The rate of years of life lost from traffic crashes in East Portland and East Multnomah County is double that found in inner Portland neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup>

The problem of traffic crash deaths is dire, and we know speed is the main issue. Higher speeds increase the likelihood of a crash and result in more severe injuries. Among pedestrians, the risk of death rises steeply at speeds above 25-30mph.<sup>3</sup> For this reason, the World Health Organization recommends a maximum speed on urban roadways of 30mph, estimating that a 5% reduction in speeds can lead to a 30%

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<sup>1</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Underlying Cause of Death 1999-2019 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released in 2020. Data are for 2010-2019.

<sup>2</sup> [Multnomah County REACH Transportation Crash and Safety Report. 2021](#)

<sup>3</sup> Tefft, B. C. (2013). Impact speed and a pedestrian's risk of severe injury or death. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*, 50, 871-878.

reduction in fatalities.<sup>4</sup> If we could achieve a 30% reduction in traffic deaths in Multnomah County, that would mean over 20 families would not be grieving a loved one lost in 2020.

Fortunately, we don't have to innovate to solve this problem, all we have to do is emulate countries and cities around the world that have successfully reduced traffic crash deaths. Enforcement cameras can help us reduce speed as they have helped other cities. This strategy is recognized by major public health institutions as a safety intervention backed by strong scientific evidence.<sup>5</sup> The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation What Works for Health project also found that automated enforcement is likely to reduce health disparities such as those documented by Multnomah County Health Department in the report mentioned earlier.

HB2530 facilitates the use of automated enforcement by allowing cameras on priority safety corridors, removing the existing sunset date, and by expanding the number of jurisdictions that can operate cameras. This last point is an important one for Multnomah County, where crashes outside of the City of Portland have been trending upward in recent years. Finally, I'll add that we are also supportive of HB3357, which would facilitate more efficient operation of automated speed enforcement by taking the same approach we take with parking enforcement: using non-police personnel to review and issue citations.

Thank you for your time and I am happy to answer any questions you may have.

Thank you,

Andrea Hamberg  
Interim Environmental Health Director  
Multnomah County Health Department

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<sup>4</sup> Global status report on road safety 2018. Geneva: World Health Organization; 2018. Licence: CC BY-NC-SA 3.0 IGO. Available from:

[https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/road\\_safety\\_status/2018/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/road_safety_status/2018/en/)

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control (2015). Automated Speed-Camera Enforcement. Available from: <https://www.cdc.gov/transportationsafety/>