

## ***SLOW DOWN NYC***

A Law to Enact a Speed Camera  
Demonstration Program For New York City

A7744 (Glick)  
S4393 (Duane)

### Summary

This law authorizes the City of New York to establish a speed camera demonstration program. The program would place a maximum of 40 cameras throughout the five boroughs in locations where speeding and speed-related crashes, injuries, and fatalities are prevalent. The law places liability on the owners of vehicles found to be driving in excess of the posted speed limit. Owners would **not be subject to points on their license**. Violations will be administered under the Parking Violations Bureau and individuals will still have the right to contest their tickets. **Photos are only taken of license plates and not of the driver.**

### NYC's Deadly Speeding Epidemic

On average, 39% of city motorists exceed the established speed limit<sup>1</sup>. Rampant speeding deteriorates public safety. In 2008, 79 people were killed and 3,793 people were injured as the result of speeding-related crashes in New York City<sup>2</sup>.

Furthermore, according to 2008 New York State DMV Data, speeding causes **more fatal crashes in NYC than any other driving behavior** and is the **number four cause of all NYC crashes, fatal and non-fatal**.



### Speeding Across the Boroughs: Five Snapshots of Local Streets<sup>3</sup>

- In Manhattan, 70% of drivers on East Houston Street speed through a school zone.
- In the Bronx, 32% of drivers on Webster Avenue speed past a school as fast as 66mph.
- In Queens, 32% of drivers on Northern Boulevard speed through a busy commercial area, past a school and police station.
- In Brooklyn, 88% of drivers on Rogers Avenue in Prospect Lefferts Gardens speed.
- On Hylan Boulevard, Staten Island's most dangerous street, 39% of drivers exceed the speed limit, many reaching fatal speeds over 60mph.

<sup>1</sup> Transportation Alternatives, *Terminal Velocity: New York City's Speeding Epidemic*, February 2009

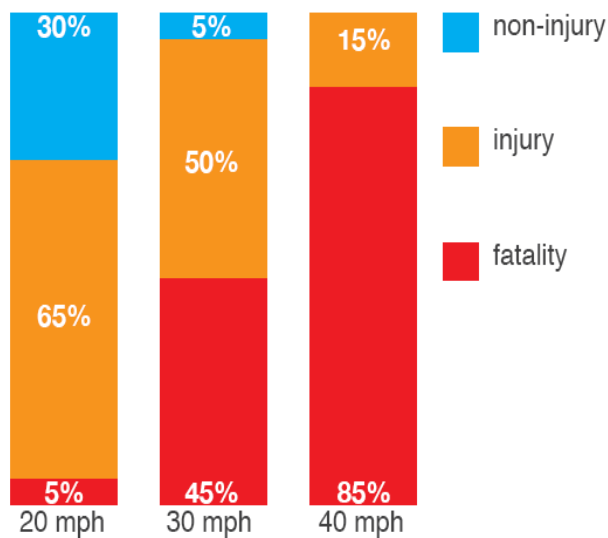
<sup>2</sup> New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, *Motor Vehicle Accidents Table 7(P) Speed-Related Accident Data by County, 2008*

<sup>3</sup> Transportation Alternatives, *Terminal Velocity: New York City's Speeding Epidemic*, February 2009

## Speed Kills

With better enforcement, speeding deaths are preventable. A pedestrian struck by a car travelling at 20mph has a 95% of *survival*; a pedestrian struck by a car travelling at 40mph has an 85% chance of *death*. Drivers are also put at risk. The Federal Highway Administration writes, “the relationship between vehicle speed and crash severity is unequivocal and based on the laws of physics...the probably of injury, and the severity of injuries...increase exponentially with vehicle speed.”<sup>4</sup>

PEDESTRIAN INJURY SEVERITY VS. VEHICLE IMPACT SPEED



## Cameras Help the NYPD

New York City has 12,500 signalized intersections and 19,490 miles of streets and highways. Especially now, with fewer resources for the NYPD, the agency needs support on the streets. This is evidenced by the fact that the total number of speeding tickets issued each year has fallen, while the number of speeding related deaths continues to rise—between 2001 and 2006, the number of tickets dropped 22% while the number of fatalities rose 11 percent<sup>5</sup>. There are simply too many drivers speeding and not enough enforcement resources.

New York City’s existing red-light camera program is an excellent example of how a successful automated enforcement program can support the NYPD.

<sup>4</sup> Stuster J, Coffman Z, and Warren D, *Synthesis of Safety Research Related to Speed and Speed Management*, Federal Highway Administration Publication No. FHWA-RD-98-154, July, 1998.

<sup>5</sup> NYS Governor’s Traffic Safety Committee County Traffic Safety Data Reports 2001-2006

Cameras now issue as much as 95.5% of all red light summonses, freeing up officers to tackle crime. Furthermore, since the red light camera program’s inception, violations have actually dropped between 40-60%. Similar city-wide successes in both increased officer staffing flexibility and reduction in rates of violation could be achieved with a speed camera demonstration program.

## Proven Success: Cameras are a Low Cost and Effective Tool to reduce Speeding

Speed cameras are a low-cost and proven technology that saves lives. Speed cameras are now in place in the District of Columbia, California, North Carolina, Maryland, Massachusetts, Ohio, Colorado, Iowa, New Mexico, Oregon, Tennessee, Utah, Arizona, Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom. Research supports the effectiveness of cameras. A 2006 review found a 14-72% reduction in all crashes around a camera site and a 40-45% reduction in crashes involving fatalities and injuries.<sup>6</sup>

## Fiscally Prudent

Speed cameras are also a smart choice in a difficult budget year. Commenting on the Mayor’s recent budget cuts, Patrick Lynch of the Patrolman’s Benevolent Association remarked, “Staffing levels at the NYPD have reached the breaking point already. Safe streets are a magnet for prosperity just as dangerous streets prevent neighborhoods from thriving. It would be in the city’s best fiscal interest to spend the dollars it does have beefing up the fight against crime, terrorism and disorder.” This legislation would enable the NYPD to dramatically increase pedestrian safety without further economic or personal expenditures.

## Enforcing Existing Laws

This legislation will not create new penalties. New York State law currently prohibits driving over the speed limit. This legislation simply makes it easier to enforce existing laws.

## A Pilot Program

This program will sunset 5 years after enactment.

<sup>6</sup> Wilson C, Willis C, Hendrikz JK, and Bellany N, *Speed enforcement detection devices for preventing road traffic injuries*, The Cochrane Database