

# PBOT

PORTLAND BUREAU OF TRANSPORTATION

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**Jo Ann Hardesty** Commissioner **Chris Warner** Director

February 3, 2022

Representative Smith Warner, Chair  
House Committee on Rules  
900 Court Street, NE  
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Smith Warner and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 4105 -1 and explain its critical role to improving safety on Oregon roadways.

HB 4105 with the -1 amendment will expand the capacity of local jurisdictions to operate traffic-camera systems by allowing a "traffic enforcement agent" to review and issue tickets.

In Oregon, all photos taken by traffic safety cameras are reviewed to ensure they match DMV records. Under current state law, only a police officer can review the records and sign the ticket. However, this is an administrative function that could be performed more efficiently by a trained and authorized traffic agent. Expanding the pool of trained, certified reviewers would increase capacity and reduce costs of operating traffic-camera safety programs. Outside of Oregon, about half of all U.S. states with traffic safety camera enforcement treat it this way.

The purpose of HB 4105 -1 is to allow qualified individuals who are not law enforcement officers to review violations and sign citations initiated by traffic cameras. Reviewers would be trained and certified. This proposal is similar to how parking enforcement officers issue parking citations in Portland today.

Traffic safety camera enforcement plays an important role in making Portland streets calmer and safer. Data shows that speed safety cameras have reduced top-end speeding (more than 10 mph above the speed limit) by 94%. Furthermore, the cameras have reduced *all* speeding by 71% on those corridors. And, critically, red light running cameras have nearly halved the number of serious traffic crashes at intersections where cameras are present.

Portland places cameras in locations with a history of crashes related to speeding and red light running, using a data-driven approach to determine where the cameras will have the most effect on safety. Today, Portland's traffic safety camera system is relatively small, with 18 fixed traffic cameras in place. To reduce fatal crashes and protect drivers and pedestrians, Portland plans to expand the number of traffic safety cameras over the next two to three years. However, additional administrative capacity is necessary to support this system expansion.



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Shifting review responsibility to an administrative function is necessary for Portland to be able to expand this highly effective safety program. A new class of agents will provide capacity for expansion that is not possible with police staffing shortages. In addition, the shift will reduce costs, supporting a program that comes close to breaking even year-over-year. In Portland today, 100% of traffic safety camera violation review occurs on police over-time. Expanding the pool of qualified reviewers would lower the cost of this function. As previously referenced, this class of agents will be similar to parking enforcement officers who are trained and authorized to issue parking tickets. Prior to being sworn in by the governing body, traffic enforcement agents will complete technical and administrative training requirements.

In conclusion, HB 4105 with the -1 amendment provides local flexibility to expand life-saving traffic-camera programs in Portland and across the state. Thank you in advance for your support of more efficient traffic safety enforcement and helping make Oregon streets safer.

Respectfully,

Dana Dickman  
Safety Section Manager