WSDOT’s Agency Request Legislation Update for Automated Speed Enforcement using Speed Safety Camera Systems (SSCS) in Work Zones

FHWA Work Zone Safety Peer Exchange
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Why does Washington State need this bill?

Reducing speeding in work zones is critical to increasing the safety of workers and the traveling public.

Trends in higher speeds on state highways have been increasing:

- Since the COVID-19 pandemic, WSDOT has seen a shift in traffic patterns. Traffic volumes outside of general commuting hours have trended lighter, which has led to an increase in speeding drivers.
- As of July 31, 2021, motorists' speeds in several Washington counties showed an average increase of 10% over those driven for the same days in 2019.
  - For our largest three counties (King, Pierce and Snohomish) between March and July daily speeds averaged 12% higher compared to pre-pandemic levels.
- Of 1232 work zone collisions reported in 2020, 230 crashes can be attributed to high speed alone.
- WSDOT and the highway contracting community continue to see a high number of speed related collisions and near misses inside work zones.

Higher speeds in work zones can and have often led to more severe injury and fatalities when collisions occur.
What would this legislation accomplish?

The current Senate and House bill versions would generally authorize:

- WSDOT to make rules to implement, administer and operate speed safety camera systems on state highway work zones.
- Washington State Patrol (WSP) to make rules and manage law enforcement activities such as issuing infractions and adjudication processes with Washington’s Office of Administrative Hearings

The current bill versions also require rulemaking to be done with input from agency partners including, but not limited to:

- Department of Licensing
- Washington Traffic Safety Commission
- Organizations dedicated to the protection of civil liberties to ensure equity and access to justice for all
Work Zone Safety Initiatives

Next Steps – Assuming Passage in the 2023 Legislative Session (April Timeframe):

Rulemaking by both WSDOT and WSP

- Develop Washington Administrative Code (WAC) details – multiple stakeholder meetings:
  - Criteria for when and where to deploy SSCS in work zones such as location, volumes, average speeds, etc. performance metrics and reporting
  - Speeding thresholds – maintain WSP discretion when issuing infractions
  - Defined fine structures – current vision is 1st time warning, 2nd and thereafter, two-year reset
  - Adjudication processes with Office of Administrative Hearings
  - Enhancing the framework for ongoing equity considerations

- Other: Request for Proposals, hiring a vendor, contract administration processes, hiring program management staff

Timeline – Begin rulemaking by July 1, 2023 - Launch the SSCS Program by July 1, 2024 (or earlier)
Automated Enforcement
Speed Safety Camera Systems

Anticipated Process

WSDOT gains broad legislative authority to implement SSCS in works zones (2023 session)

Hire FTE/Program Manager at WSDOT

Rule Making, WAC development with agency partners, including ongoing equity consideration

RFP to vendors

Implement the program (Fall 2023/Spring 2024)

SSCS deployed in a given work zone

Law enforcement verifies/certifies infractions and issues citations (on paid overtime)

Vendor notifies offender of infraction

Office of Administrative Hearings

VENDOR:
- Collects speed data
- Transmits violator info to law enforcement for verification and citation issuance
- Sends infractions to offender
- Manages most back office work

VIOLATOR:
- 1st time warning
- Seeks adjudication or pays $248 fines for 2nd offense and thereafter
- Reset after 2 years

Office of Administrative Hearings
- Access to justice
- Mitigation
- Remediation
- Appeals to Superior Court

Updated 10/31/22
1. What examples of RFQ/RFP/specifications are available?
2. We are looking for recommendations on vendors.
3. What lessons can we learn from other states?

Thank you!

For more information, or if you have questions, please contact:
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