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## Transportation Committee

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### HB 1279

**Brief Description:** Concerning traffic safety at certain intersections and on certain streets.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Ladenburg, Asay, Dammeier, Ryu, Liias, Jinkins, Takko, Fitzgibbon and Kenney.

#### Brief Summary of Bill

- Requires all traffic control signals to have yellow light change intervals that are at least as long as the minimum interval identified in the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices.
- Requires a jurisdiction to conduct an analysis of proposed camera locations before enacting an ordinance allowing for the use of cameras and before adding new camera locations.
- Expands the use of the cameras to detect speed limit violations on arterial streets adjacent to major transit stations, public parks, or recreation facilities.
- Allows cameras to be placed at intersections of two or more arterials.
- Restricts the use of cameras when issuing infractions regarding right turn movements that violate crosswalk laws.

**Hearing Date:** 2/1/11

**Staff:** Wendy Malkin (786-7114).

#### **Background:**

Local governments are authorized to use automated traffic safety cameras subject to the following conditions:

- an ordinance must first be enacted by the local legislative authority allowing their use to detect only stoplight, railroad crossing, or school speed zone violations, and setting forth public notice and signage provisions;

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- use of the automated traffic safety cameras is restricted to two-arterial intersections, railroad crossings, and school speed zones only, except in the case of on-going pilot projects involving the use of automated traffic safety cameras to detect speed violations and work zone safety violations;
- pictures may be taken of only vehicles and vehicle license plates while an infraction is occurring and must not reveal driver or passenger faces;
- all locations where a camera is used must be clearly marked by signs indicating the presence of a camera zone;
- infraction notices must be mailed to the registered owner of the vehicle within 14 days of the infraction and may be responded to by mail;
- the compensation paid to the manufacturer or vendor of the equipment must be based only on the value of the equipment and services provided and not on a portion of the fines or revenue;
- infractions detected through the use of cameras are not part of the registered owner's driving record;
- infractions detected through the use of cameras must be processed in the same manner as parking infractions; and
- the registered owner of a vehicle is responsible for an infraction detected by an automated traffic safety camera unless the owner states under oath that the vehicle involved was, at the time, stolen or in the care, custody, or control of another person.

The Washington State Department of Transportation periodically adopts the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD), published by the Federal Highway Safety Administration. The MUTCD provides guidance on a variety of traffic control topics. The MUTCD provides the following guidance on the duration of yellow change intervals and red clearance intervals:

- The duration of a yellow change interval shall be predetermined.
  - Guidance: A yellow change interval should have a duration of approximately three to six seconds. The longer intervals should be reserved for use on approaches with higher speeds.
  - Option: The yellow change interval may be followed by a red clearance interval to provide additional time before conflicting traffic movements, including pedestrians, are released.
- The duration of a red clearance interval shall be predetermined.
  - Guidance: A red clearance interval should have a duration not exceeding 6 seconds.

### **Summary of Bill:**

All traffic control signals must have yellow light change intervals that are at least as long as the minimum interval identified in the federal Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD).

The following provisions are added to the automated traffic safety camera law:

- requires a jurisdiction to conduct an analysis of proposed camera locations before enacting an ordinance allowing for the use of cameras and before adding new camera locations;
- expands the use of the cameras to detect speed limit violations on arterial streets adjacent to major transit stations, public parks, or recreation facilities;

- requires annual reports regarding numbers of traffic accidents at intersections where a camera is located and the number of infractions issued for each camera;
- allows cameras to be placed at intersections of two or more arterials;
- restricts the use of cameras when issuing infractions regarding right turn movements that violate crosswalk laws;
- limits the use of cameras in school speed zones to set hours when people are arriving or leaving the school and to zones marked with approved school zone signs that have flashing lights;
- requires a 30-day period, after a camera is newly installed or relocated, during which only warnings may be issued; and
- requires signs placed in camera locations to conform with the MUTCD.

Major transit stations means park and ride facilities, intermodal transit facilities, or transit stops used by two or more transit routes for transfers between routes. Automated traffic safety cameras may be placed on arterial streets adjacent to public parks and recreation facilities only if the jurisdiction demonstrates a need for the camera because the facility generates significant pedestrian traffic or is heavily used by children.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Requested on January 27, 2011.

**Effective Date:** The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.