



**NEWS RELEASE**

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## **TRANSPORTATION SECRETARY SWAIM-STALEY DEMONSTRATES HOW AUTOMATED SPEED ENFORCEMENT WORKS**

*New Law Strives to Make Work Zones Safer for Workers, Drivers and Passengers*

**(September 30, 2009)** –Transportation Secretary Beverley K. Swaim-Staley was joined today by legislators, law enforcement and traffic safety agencies to demonstrate how the new automated speed enforcement technology (ASE) will function in work zones. The Maryland Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) State Highway Administration (SHA), Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA) and Maryland State Police (MSP) today kicked off the new pilot program - *Maryland SafeZones*. The goal of the *Maryland SafeZones* program is to use this new technology to modify driver behavior and to make work zones safer for workers, drivers and their passengers.

“Speeding drivers endanger everyone, especially when traveling through work zones where there is little to no margin for error,” said Secretary Swaim-Staley. “The overriding goal of the *Maryland SafeZones* program is to influence drivers to do what they should already be doing: paying attention and obeying the posted speed limit. Thanks to our hardworking legislators, we have a new tool to make Maryland’s roads safer.”

Joining her for the demonstration was SHA Administrator Neil J. Pedersen, MdTA Executive Secretary Ronald L. Freeland, MdTA Police Chief Marcus Brown, Maryland State Police Lt. Col. Rob Turano, Senator James N. Robey, work zone safety advocate Laurie Moser and State and local elected officials. The event also included a look at the large warning signs that will be posted on the highway and an announcement of the locations where the new automated speed enforcement equipment will be used to identify speeders.

The law that allows automated speed enforcement was passed during the 2009 legislative session and becomes effective on October 1. Transportation Article § 21–810 allows law enforcement to use speed cameras to fine drivers exceeding the speed limit by 12 or more miles in work zones along controlled access roadways with a 45 mph or more speed limit.

*Maryland SafeZones* mobile enforcement vehicles (vans or SUVs) will rotate among eligible work zones throughout the State. Initially, SHA, MSP and MdTA will use ASE in these construction work zones:

- I-95 between MD 198 and MD 212 in the ICC work zone in Prince George’s County,
- I-695 at Charles Street in Baltimore County, and
- I-95 between I-895 and White Marsh Boulevard in Baltimore County.

**(More)**

## Automated Enforcement

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SHA or MdTA will place large signs in advance of work zones to alert drivers of automated speed enforcement use. Crews will place a “speed trailer” to display the posted speed limit and drivers’ speeds in advance of the enforcement vehicle. MSP or MdTA Police will certify all violations. For at least 30 days of the pilot, only warning notices will be issued to violators.

“Because construction work zone space constrictions limit police’s ability to perform traffic stops, *SafeZones* offers another critical tool in the ongoing crusade to keep Maryland roadways safe,” said Maryland State Police Lt. Col. Rob Turano. “Among those who will be protected by *SafeZones* are Troopers and other law enforcement personnel who assist in work zone traffic control. In fact, one of our Troopers was injured when his vehicle was struck here at the ICC project, while assisting on one of the first lane closures on southbound I-95.”

Four out of every five people injured or killed in work zone crashes are drivers or their passengers, not workers. Even when workers are not present, work zones can be dangerous due to reduced lane width, barrier walls, uneven pavement and modified signage placement. On average, during the last 10 years, 12 people were killed and 1,484 people were injured in crashes involving work zones. Last year, there were seven people killed, and 1,067 people injured in more than 2,000 crashes in work zones.

“Having several major projects underway, the Maryland Transportation Authority and its police force welcome *Maryland SafeZones* as a countermeasure to aggressive drivers in work zones, where workers and drivers are particularly vulnerable,” said MdTA Police Chief Marcus Brown. “MdTA police officers will remain vigilant in enforcing aggressive driving laws, complementing the efforts of *SafeZones*.”

“This is a law whose time has certainly come, and I applaud my fellow legislators for taking on the challenge to pass it and other laws in the last General Assembly aimed at making it safer to drive in our State,” said Senator James Robey. “The challenges remain, but this is a giant step.”

The fine for a speeding violation issued through the ASE is \$40. Revenue collected from the civil fines will be used to cover the costs of implementing and administering the *Maryland SafeZones* program. For the first three years, the balance after recovering program costs, if any, will go to an account for police roadside enforcement activities.

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