



HCCA

Howard County Citizens Association

Since 1961... The Voice of the People of Howard County

Dear County Council Members:

My name is Ryan Powers. I am from Glenwood, and today I'm speaking for the Howard County Citizens Association in support of expanding the school speed camera program, CB51-2025.

To put it mildly, we believe Howard County has a speeding problem. When combined with kids walking to and from school, it becomes a serious safety issue. We believe expansion of the speed camera program will make drivers more aware of speed limits within school zones.

My children's elementary school has a regional program for children with emotional disabilities. Last year, there were problems with frequent elopement from the school and at one point a child was simply lying in the middle of the road, a road which was identified as being in the top five areas having the most frequently issued speed citations per the fiscal report. In this case, this child was surrounded by school staff and, eventually, police. But I don't think drivers consider circumstances like these as well as regular safety issues when they are travelling significantly over the speed limit 37,000+ times a year past Howard County schools, according to the fiscal note.

The HCCA would also like greater accountability in the speed camera program so that funding is guaranteed to go to pedestrian improvements within school walk zones. Unfortunately, budget constraints within the school system led to the Board of Education increasing the distances students had to walk to school two years ago. Under intense community safety concerns, these changes were walked back this year, but as HCPSS has had to cut over 100 positions each year for the past two years now we are concerned transportation funding will continue to be an issue.

Pedestrian infrastructure near schools should be built up now in anticipation of future walk zone issues, and the speed camera program should be expanded to hold drivers more accountable.

Thank you for your time,

Ryan Powers,
HCCA Board member