Office of Senate Floor Analyses
(916) 651-4171

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

Bill No: SB 1279
Author: Gonzalez (D), et al.
Amended: 8/13/26
Vote: 21

SENATE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE: 10-1, 4/7/26
AYES: Cortese, Archuleta, Arreguín, Blakespear, Gonzalez, Grayson, Menjivar, Richardson, Valladares, Wiener
NOES: Strickland
NO VOTE RECORDED: Dahle, Seyarto

SENATE PRIV., DIGITAL TECH. & CONS. PROT. COMMITTEE: 7-2, 4/13/26
AYES: Cabaldon, Gonzalez, McNerney, Padilla, Reyes, Umberg, Wiener
NOES: Jones, Ochoa Bogh

SENATE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE: 5-0, 5/14/26
AYES: Cervantes, Cabaldon, Grayson, Richardson, Wahab
NO VOTE RECORDED: Seyarto, Dahle

SENATE FLOOR: 33-6, 5/19/26
AYES: Allen, Alvarado-Gil, Archuleta, Arreguín, Ashby, Becker, Blakespear, Cabaldon, Caballero, Cervantes, Cortese, Dahle, Durazo, Gonzalez, Grayson, Hurtado, Laird, Limón, McGuire, McNerney, Menjivar, Padilla, Pérez, Reyes, Richardson, Rubio, Smallwood-Cuevas, Stern, Umberg, Valladares, Wahab, Weber Pierson, Wiener
NOES: Choi, Grove, Jones, Ochoa Bogh, Seyarto, Strickland
NO VOTE RECORDED: Niello

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 65-7, 8/24/26 - See last page for vote

SUBJECT: Speed safety systems

SOURCE: Author

DIGEST: This bill authorizes the City of Long Beach to have two additional automated speed enforcement cameras on the Pacific Coast Highway (PCH) as part of the Speed Safety System Pilot Program established by AB 645 (Friedman, Chapter 808, Statutes of 2023).

Assembly Amendments reduce the number of newly permissible cameras for the City of Long Beach to operate on PCH from five to two, add the new camera authorization to the existing speed safety system pilot program, and increase privacy protection requirements for the entire AB 645 pilot through new image blurring requirements.

ANALYSIS:

Existing law:

1) Establishes a speed safety system pilot program in the cities of Long Beach, Los Angeles, San Jose, Oakland, Glendale, and San Francisco with the following provisions:

    a) The number of cameras is capped, and the trial is limited to five years.

    b) The program must be approved by the local governing body and is subject to substantial public input, notice and warnings.

    c) Violations are a civil penalty with specified fines which may be lowered depending on income.

    d) Fine revenue pays for the operation of the pilot with any extra revenues dedicated to traffic calming measures.

    e) An appeals process and privacy protections are established.

    f) The local governing body must report to the Legislature on the impact of the program.

2) Establishes a speed safety system pilot program in the City of Malibu which allows for up to five cameras on PCH, requires enhanced signage to alert drivers of their speed, the speed limit, and the presence of video enforcement, and requires the City of Malibu to continue funding additional patrols by the California Highway Patrol (CHP). The program can operate for five years or until January 1, 2032, whichever is earlier.

3) Establishes a speed safety system pilot program in work zones on state highways administered by the Department of Transportation (Caltrans).

This bill:

1) Authorizes the City of Long Beach to install and operate two speed safety systems on PCH, in addition to the City's existing program.

2) Allows the program to operate for five years or until January 1, 2032, whichever is earlier.

3) Requires the City of Long Beach to develop uniform guidelines on the screening and issuance of notices of violation and storage of confidential information.

4) Requires the city to administer a public information campaign which identifies the location of the cameras and the timeframe when they will be in use.

5) Allows the program to only issue warning notices during the first 60 days of enforcement; additionally a vehicle's first violation for traveling 11 to 15 miles per hour (mph) over the speed limit shall be a warning notice.

6) Specifies privacy provisions related to the storage and usage of violation records.

7) Provides for the following fines to the owner of the registered vehicle:

   a) $50 for a speed violation from 11 to 15 mph over the posted speed limit.

   b) $100 for a speed violation from 16 to 25 mph over the posted speed limit;

   c) $200 for a speed violation of 26 mph or more over the posted speed limit; and,

   d) $500 for traveling at a speed of 100 mph or greater.

8) Indicates the fine is a civil penalty and shall not result in a loss of the driving privilege or in a violation point being assessed against the violator.

9) Requires indigent individuals to be offered community service in lieu of the fine, or the fine is reduced by 80%. The fine is reduced by 50% for individuals up to 250% above the federal poverty level.

10) Provides that a person will not be subject to a civil violation if there is proof the vehicle was being used by someone sharing their vehicle in a personal vehicle sharing program or if proof of a copy of a police report indicating the vehicle had been stolen at the time of the violation, in addition to the existing provision for the owner of a rental car.

11) Requires, to the extent feasible, for the speed safety system camera to be angled and focused so as to only capture photographs of speeding violations and not capture identifying images of other drivers, vehicles, or pedestrians, and to blur any image of a pedestrian.

12) Requires the revenue raised by speed cameras to first be spent on implementing the program and then be spent on traffic-calming measures. Funds not spent within three years are required to be sent to the Active Transportation Program (ATP).

13) Establishes an appeals process for ticketed drivers.

14) Requires the city to report to the Legislature an evaluation of the speed safety system.

15) Requires the speed safety systems to blur any images that are unavoidably captured of other drivers, vehicles, or pedestrians who are not the subject of a notice of violation.

16) Specifies that cameras installed prior to January 1, 2027, need to blur any images that are unavoidably captured of other drivers, vehicles, or pedestrians only to the extent feasible.

Comments

1) *Purpose of the bill.* According to the author, “For the last two years, six cities throughout California, including Long Beach, have been rolling out a speed camera pilot program, placing speed cameras in areas like high-injury intersections and streets with elevated crash rates. These speed cameras are already making streets safer – since activating speed cameras, San Francisco

has seen a 72% decrease in speeding. Unfortunately, current law regulating the pilot program does not allow Long Beach to place speed cameras along the City's portion of Pacific Coast Highway (PCH), where over 20% of the City's speeding-related fatalities occur.

"While the PCH only accounts for 8 miles of Long Beach's 217 miles of high-capacity roadway, it accounts for 39 of its 192 crash fatalities since 2020. That means that 20% of the City's crash fatalities have occurred on less than 1% of its roads. SB 1279 will give the City the authority it needs to place speed cameras along the PCH and make this road safer for the community."

2) *What are speed safety systems?* Speed safety systems are speed detecting cameras that use speed measurement devices to detect speeding and capture photographic or video evidence of vehicles that are violating a set speed threshold. Research shows that speed cameras effectively reduce speed and speed-related crashes. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), fixed camera units can reduce crashes on urban principal arterials up to 54% for all crashes and 48% for injury crashes.[1]

   A 2016 analysis of an automated speed camera enforcement program in Montgomery County, Maryland titled "*Effects of automated speed enforcement in Montgomery County, Maryland, on vehicle speeds, public opinion, and crashes,"* reported that, "[r]elative to comparable sites without cameras, sites with cameras saw a decrease in mean speeds, a decrease in the likelihood that a driver was driving at more than ten miles per hour above the speed limit, and a reduction in the likelihood of a crash resulting in an incapacitating or fatal injury."[2] As of January 2022, 171 communities in 18 states and the District of Columbia used automated speed camera enforcement. However, opponents raise concerns around the potential for these programs to inadvertently further social inequities for those unable to pay. Additionally, some opponents raise privacy concerns around the potential for unauthorized data sharing.

3) *A brief history of speed cameras in California.* In 2023, the Legislature passed and the Governor signed AB 645 (Friedman, Chapter 808, Statutes of 2023), which authorized the use of automated speed enforcement cameras in California for the first time. AB 645 created a five-year pilot program to give local transportation authorities in the cities of San Jose, Oakland, Los Angeles,

[1] **https://highways.dot.gov/sites/fhwa.dot.gov/files/Speed%20Safety%20Cameras_508.pdf**
[2] Hu, W., & McCartt, A. T. (2016). Effects of automated speed enforcement in Montgomery County, Maryland, on vehicle speeds, public opinion, and crashes. Traffic Injury Prevention, 17(sup1), 53–58. https://doi.org/10.1080/15389588.2016.1189076

Glendale, Long Beach, and the City and County of San Francisco the authority to install speed safety systems. Under the pilot, cities can issue civil penalties to the registered owner of the ticketed vehicle as follows:

- $50 for driving 11 to 15 mph over the posted speed limit.
- $100 for driving 16 to 25 mph over the posted speed limit.
- $200 for driving 26 mph or more over the posted speed limit.
- $500 for driving 100 mph or more.

The pilot also included numerous equity and privacy-related provisions. The following year, in 2024, the Legislature passed and Governor Newsom signed SB 1297 (Allen, Chapter 631, Statutes of 2024). This bill authorized the City of Malibu to operate five speed cameras on PCH for five years or until January 1, 2032, whichever is earlier. This was the first time speed cameras were authorized for use on a state highway. The expansion of the pilot was attributed to Malibu's uniquely high rate of fatal and serious injury crashes on the city's section of PCH.

4) *Status of the current pilots.* Of the numerous jurisdictions authorized to use speed cameras, only San Francisco and Oakland have launched their programs. The City of Long Beach anticipates beginning its 60-day warning period this summer at 18 locations across the City.

   The San Francisco Municipal Transportation Agency (SFMTA) Speed Safety Camera program launched in March 2025, and all 33 cameras were issuing warnings as of June 6, 2025. The program began issuing citations on August 5, 2025. A six-month analysis of the program examined speeding at 15 key sample locations before and after SFMTA installed the cameras. It showed that speeding decreased by 72% on average at these locations.[3] SFMTA also reported approximately 20,000 fewer vehicles were speeding at these locations every single day.

   The City of Oakland released a report on the city's speed camera program on August 20, 2026. The report found, "that drivers are slowing down at every

[3] **Our Speed Cameras are Working: Initial Evaluation Shows Drivers are Slowing Down | SFMTA**

speed camera location. The number of vehicles traveling 11 MPH or more over the speed limit dropped by an average of 70% across all 18 camera locations."[4]

5) *SB 1279 authorizes Long Beach to install two cameras on PCH.* Under the local speed camera pilot program authorized through AB 645 in 2023, the City of Long Beach cannot deploy any of its 18 speed safety systems along state highways. AB 645 only allowed speed cameras to be installed on local streets and roads. PCH—also known as State Route 1—is a state highway and thus not eligible for camera placement under AB 645. According to the City of Long Beach, PCH constitutes only 8 miles of the City's 217 miles of arterial roads, yet it has accounted for 39 of the 192 speed-related fatalities in the City since January 2020. That means, according to Long Beach, that this less than 1% stretch of highway accounts for over 20%, or 1 in 5, of the City's traffic deaths.

   This bill amends the current speed safety system pilot's authorizing statute to permit the City of Long Beach to operate two additional camera systems on PCH. Additionally, this bill adds requirements for all speed safety systems to blur any images incidentally collected of any nonrelevant drivers, vehicles, or pedestrians not subject to a notice of violation.

Related/Prior Legislation

AB 289 (Haney, Chapter 684, Statutes of 2025) – This bill authorized Caltrans to establish a five-year work zone speed safety pilot program to enforce speeding violations in highway maintenance and construction work zones using speed safety systems.

SB 1297 (Allen, Chapter 631, Statutes of 2024) – This bill authorized the City of Malibu to establish a speed safety system pilot program of up to five cameras on PCH.

AB 645 (Friedman, Chapter 808, Statutes of 2023) – This bill established a speed safety system pilot program in six specified cities.

FISCAL EFFECT: Appropriation: No Fiscal Com.: Yes Local: No

[4] **Oakland Speed Safety Cameras: Six-Month Report (1/14/26-7/15/26) | City of Oakland, CA**

According to the Assembly Appropriations Committee:

- Cost pressures to the courts of an unknown, but potentially significant amount to adjudicate appeals of alleged violations captured by devices installed by the City of Malibu (General Fund (GF), Trial Court Trust Fund (TCTF)). The bill authorizes a person who receives a notice of violation to appeal it through an administrative appeals process and, if the administrative appeal sustains the violation, to file an appeal in court. It is unclear how many court actions may be filed for such alleged violations, which the bill specifies to be subject to civil penalties—not criminal penalties—but the estimated workload cost of one hour of court time is $1,000.

- Although courts are not funded on the basis of workload, increased pressure on staff and the TCTF may create a need for increased court funding from the GF to perform existing duties. The state budget provides annual General Fund backfills to the Trial Court Trust Fund to offset revenue reductions, totaling approximately $117.3 million in 2025-26. Any such costs would be offset, somewhat, by the $25 filing fee authorized by existing law.

SUPPORT: (Verified 8/24/26)

AAA Northern California, Nevada & Utah
Alliance for Automotive Innovation
Associated General Contractors, California Chapters
Auto Club of Southern California
Bike Long Beach
California Bicycle Coalition
Car-lite Long Beach
City of Long Beach
City of Long Beach Councilmember, Daryl Supernaw
City of Long Beach Councilmember, Roberto Uranga
City of Long Beach Councilmember, Suely Saro
City of Signal Hill
Long Beach; City of
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
Peopleforbikes
San Francisco Bay Area Families for Safe Streets
Streets are for Everyone
Streets for All
Walk San Francisco Foundation

OPPOSITION: (Verified 8/24/26)

National Motorists Assoc

ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT: According to the City of Long Beach, "[a]utomated enforcement systems like those authorized by AB 645 are a critical tool in advancing local Safe Streets and Vision Zero goals, as speed is the most significant factor in determining the severity of a crash. Data from the National Traffic Speeds Survey, administered by the U.S. Department of Transpiration, shows that at 20 miles per hour (MPH), there is only a 13% likelihood of a pedestrian fatality or severe injury, compared to 40% at 30 MPH and 73% at 40 MPH. By encouraging reduced speeds, automated enforcement directly lowers the risk of death and life-altering injuries, particularly for pedestrians and bicyclists who are most vulnerable and prevalent on this highly urbanized segment of the highway."

ARGUMENTS IN OPPOSITION: According to the National Motorists Association, "Agreements negotiated in good faith must be honored. If not, how can the public trust the legislative process in the future? What incentive will there be to negotiate with legislators if they can nullify any resulting agreements in the next legislative session? Trust in our institutions is at an all-time low. When legislators renege on agreements, it further erodes the public's trust – and we are all the worse off for it. It is distressing that legislators are proposing to void prior agreements. If SB 1279 is approved, in every future year, there will undoubtedly be more cities requesting additional cameras or authorization to be added to the pilot."

ASSEMBLY FLOOR: 65-7, 8/24/26
AYES: Addis, Aguiar-Curry, Ahrens, Alanis, Alvarez, Arambula, Ávila Farías, Bains, Bauer-Kahan, Bennett, Berman, Boerner, Bonta, Bryan, Calderon, Caloza, Carrillo, Chen, Connolly, Davies, Dixon, Elhawary, Fong, Gabriel, Garcia, Gipson, Mark González, Haney, Harabedian, Hart, Hoover, Irwin, Jackson, Kalra, Krell, Lee, Lowenthal, Muratsuchi, Nguyen, Ortega, Pacheco, Papan, Patel, Patterson, Pellerin, Petrie-Norris, Quirk-Silva, Ramos, Ransom, Celeste Rodriguez, Michelle Rodriguez, Rogers, Blanca Rubio, Schiavo, Schultz, Sharp-Collins, Solache, Soria, Stefani, Wallis, Ward, Wicks, Wilson, Zbur, Rivas

NOES: DeMaio, Ellis, Johnson, Macedo, Sanchez, Ta, Tangipa
NO VOTE RECORDED: Castillo, Flora, Jeff Gonzalez, Hadwick, Lackey, McKinnor, Valencia

Prepared by: Isabelle LaSalle / TRANS. / (916) 651-4121
11/5/26 16:56:32

****** END ******