



District of Columbia Government
Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A
PO Box 15020
Washington, DC 20003



March 25, 2023

Via email and the ANC Resolution Website to:

Chairperson Phil Mendelson
Councilmember Kenyan R. McDuffie
Councilmember Anita Bonds
Councilmember Robert C. White
Councilmember Christina Henderson
Councilmember Brianne Nadeau
Councilmember Brooke Pinto

Councilmember Matthew Frumin
Councilmember Janeese Lewis George
Councilmember Zachary Parker
Councilmember Charles Allen
Councilmember Vincent C. Gray
Councilmember Trayon White, Sr.

Re: ANC 6A Support for Automated Traffic Enforcement Effectiveness Amendment Act and the Reckless Driver Accountability Act

Dear Councilmembers,

At a regularly scheduled and properly noticed meeting¹ on March 9, 2023, our Commission voted 6-0-0 (with 4 Commissioners required for a quorum) to send a letter of support for the Automated Traffic Enforcement Effectiveness Amendment Act and the Reckless Driver Accountability Act.

As noted in the introduction of the Automated Traffic Enforcement Effectiveness Amendment Act of 2022, “Fines have not proven to be an effective enforcement mechanism, as there are several instances of drivers accumulating thousands and thousands of dollars in fines for moving violations to no consequence.” Vehicles operated by habitually aggressive and willfully negligent drivers continue to be photographed by our Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) systems, but the \$66 million in outstanding unpaid fines (as of the most recent ATE Semi-Annual Report²) clearly present a system that is not effective at enforcing traffic safety measures, but rather merely at issuing citations. Additionally, several recent instances of gun violence have been linked with vehicles accumulating these thousands of dollars in fines, including one involved with the tragic death of 15-year-old Andre Robertson Jr., who was killed on his front porch last October just steps from Kelly Miller Middle School.

The well-documented lack of reciprocity with Maryland and Virginia on this issue have added to our challenge. During the week of February 14, 2023, a Virginia-tagged vehicle with \$31,800 in 111 unpaid ATE citations (mostly for speeding) was parked on the 900 block of L Street NE. Knowing that out-of-state enforcement has been a significant challenge for the District, multiple community members reported the vehicle to the Department of Public Works (DPW) via 311 for RPP violations in order to have the vehicle immediately booted or towed.

¹ ANC 6A meetings are advertised electronically on anc6a@googlegroups.com, and newhilleast@groups.io, at www.anc6a.org, on Twitter (@ANC6A) and through print advertisements in the Hill Rag.

² Automated Traffic Enforcement Semi-Annual Report First Half of Fiscal Year 2022
<https://lims.dccouncil.gov/downloads/LIMS/51300/Introduction/RC24-0222-Introduction.pdf>

DPW indicated they cannot respond to such freelance traffic enforcement reports because that is considered “targeting”, despite the excessive history of negligent driving associated with this particular vehicle. While DPW plans to quadruple their booting crews this year, those crews will continue to be restricted in their ability to boot out-of-state vehicles, adding yet another impediment to enforcement.

ANC 6A commends the District Department of Transportation’s (DDOT) plans to more than double the number of ATE cameras in the District beginning this summer. The ATE expansion will surely increase the income generated by the ATE program, but only from those drivers willing to accept responsibility for their actions and able to pay their fines. While an individual ATE citation disproportionately affects our low-income residents, the traffic violence in the District also disproportionately affects our low-income communities, and those drivers with thousands of dollars in unpaid fines are a well-known and persistent threat to all. By implementing a points system to ATE and empowering DPW to impound vehicles with multiple violations, both the Automated Traffic Enforcement Effectiveness Amendment Act and the Reckless Driver Accountability Act offer real opportunities to remove the most threatening vehicles from our streets. The Automated Traffic Enforcement Effectiveness Amendment Act and the Reckless Driver Accountability Act are clear signs that Councilmembers recognize the ATE system is not effective as currently implemented, and we urgently request the Council’s support for and prioritization of these two pieces of legislation.

Thank you for giving great weight to the views of ANC 6A. Should you wish to discuss this letter with the Commission, please feel free to reach out to me at 6A04@anc.dc.gov.

On behalf of the Commission,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Amber K. Gove".

Amber Gove
Chair, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 6A