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## FISCAL IMPACT REPORT

ORIGINAL DATE 2/07/07  
 LAST UPDATED 3/12/07      HB \_\_\_\_\_

SPONSOR Payne

SHORT TITLE Traffic Camera and Signal Warning Signs      SB 861/aHTPWC

ANALYST Earnest

### APPROPRIATION (dollars in thousands)

Appropriation		Recurring or Non-Rec	Fund Affected
FY07	FY08		
NFI	NFI		

(Parenthesis ( ) Indicate Expenditure Decreases)

### SOURCES OF INFORMATION

LFC Files

#### Responses Received From

Department of Transportation (DOT)

#### Responses Not Received From

Department of Public Safety (DPS)

Taxation and Revenue Department (TRD)

### SUMMARY

#### Synopsis of HTPWC Amendment

The House Transportation and Public Works Committee (HTPWC) amendment would allow rumble strips to be used in place of warning beacons before intersections where camera monitors are in use. When rumble strips are used, the bill requires that warning signs be installed facing traffic approaching the intersection and, where appropriate, in a median dividing opposite directions of traffic.

Warning beacons would be synchronized with the traffic signal to flash when the signal is lighted yellow or red. Rumble strips would simply indicate that the traffic signal is monitored by camera. As an alternative to warning beacons, rumble strips would be less costly for municipalities to install.

Synopsis of Original Bill

Senate Bill 861 creates a new section of the Motor Vehicle Code to require that warning signs and beacons be installed on the approach to traffic signals where camera monitors are in use.

**FISCAL IMPLICATIONS**

There is no fiscal impact to the state. Counties or municipalities that have installed “red-light” cameras at traffic signals would be required to purchase and install flashing warning beacons and signs at those intersections.

DOT estimates the cost of installing the beacons and signage would average \$250 thousand per intersection. Currently the traffic signal communication systems don’t operate as the bill intends, and the cost includes upgrades in technology to meet requirements of this bill. The cost per intersection assumes eight beacons and signs per intersection.

**SIGNIFICANT ISSUES**

The warning signals required by this bill would flash yellow lights to inform motorists driving at the legal speed limit that they will encounter a red signal light.

Albuquerque is the only city in the state currently using “red light” cameras, and according to an *Albuquerque Journal* editorial (2/07/07), the city has reported a drop in red light running offenses at intersections where cameras have been installed. The fine for running a red light is \$100 or more, and the increase in assessed penalties has reportedly boosted revenue to the city. The *Journal* editorial notes the increased revenue is being used for the red light camera program and anti-methamphetamine initiative.

While the locations of Albuquerque’s 15 red light camera are published in the newspaper, this bill also would effectively identify the intersections where red light cameras are in use. The bill, however, does not prevent counties or municipalities from installing warning beacons at intersections without cameras.

**OTHER SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES**

To assess the fines, the City of Albuquerque has an agreement with the Taxation and Revenue Department to use the state’s motor vehicle database to match license plates with the owners.

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