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Subject: MOVE TO STOP NEW RED LIGHT CAMERAS GETS GREEN LIGHT
Date: 01/09/2014 06:28 PM
To:

Exhibit #1
 CHRISTINE TIMMON
 vs.
 CITY OF HOLLYWOOD
 CASE NO.: CACE-13-02706

MAR 4, 2014

NEWS SERVICE FLORIDA



MOVE TO STOP NEW RED LIGHT CAMERAS GETS GREEN LIGHT

By JIM TURNER
 THE NEWS SERVICE OF FLORIDA

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THE CAPITAL, TALLAHASSEE, January 9, 2014 New red light cameras would no longer be allowed under a wide-ranging transportation proposal that received the go-ahead Thursday from a House subcommittee.

But a roadblock may be ahead for the measure, which was approved in a 10-3 vote by the Transportation & Highway Safety Subcommittee.

Besides no longer allowing municipalities and counties to install red light cameras at currently unmonitored intersections after July 1, the proposal (THSS 14-01) offered by Rep. Frank Artiles, R-Miami, would reduce the penalty for red light violators caught on camera from \$158 to \$83. Local governments also would only be allowed to impose a \$25 surcharge on tickets to fund the existing systems.

"We are not removing the cameras that are already there," Artiles said. "If it's a safety issue what we're doing is basically saying the local governments are not profiteering from it."

However, the proposal is expected to face a more staunch debate at its next stop — the Transportation & Economic Development Appropriations Subcommittee — where the chairman Rep. Ed Hooper, R-Clearwater, on Thursday expressed his support for red light cameras.

Hooper said the cameras are a safety measure imposed by local governments.

"Should it get agendaed there will be a discussion from every interested party," Hooper said in regard to the bill's pending appearance before his subcommittee. "There are some camera companies that should want to do that, some government representatives that will want to do that. I assure the members of this committee that debate will occur before any additional vote on this bill takes place."

More than 100 jurisdictions across the state use traffic-light cameras that collectively have generated more than \$100 million a year through tickets. The state Department of Transportation in June directed local agencies to add at least 0.4 seconds to the yellow intervals on traffic lights. Research had found that yellow lights were set a half-a-second shorter than the recommended interval, which could result in a doubling of the number of tickets.

Tallahassee Police Department Major Chris Connell, representing the Florida Police Chiefs Association and the city, said the cameras have improved safety and lives.

"Just here in Tallahassee alone, at some of the major intersections, in any given month we see an up to 1,000 decrease in violations than what we saw at the beginning," Connell said. "This tells us that driving habits have been changed."

Paul Henry, a former Florida Highway Patrol officer, claimed the cameras have only increased crashes and that

the use of the cameras is simply a revenue-generating "scheme" for local government.

The committee proposal is separate from a measure (HB 4009) by Artiles intended to turn off red-light cameras across the state by removing the Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act of 2010 from Florida law.

That bill and its Senate companion (SB 144) by Sen. Jeff Brandes, R-St. Petersburg, have yet to be scheduled for committee hearings.

A similar proposal failed to advance last session, but lawmakers included a provision in an omnibus transportation bill (HB 7125) that is intended to make it tougher for local governments to issue tickets to drivers caught on camera turning right on red.

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