



**Written Testimony Opposing
Senate Bill 388, An Act Establishing a Pilot Program for
Speed Detecting Cameras and Concerning Speed Warning Signs**

Senator Boucher, Senator Leone, Representative Guerrero, and distinguished members of the Transportation Committee:

The American Civil Liberties Union of Connecticut (ACLU-CT) and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) are testifying in opposition to Senate Bill 388, An Act Establishing a Pilot Program for Speed Detecting Cameras and Concerning Speed Warning Signs.

The ACLU-CT and the NAACP have been vocally opposed to red light cameras because of the due process, privacy, and racial injustice issues raised by their use. Red light cameras would take photos and videos of vehicles at intersections, allowing municipalities to send tickets to the owners of cars allegedly caught in a violation.

There are due process issues with these cameras, because the camera systems ticket the registered owner of the car, regardless of who was driving. Weeks or months may pass between the alleged violation and the issuance of the ticket, impairing the owner's ability to recall the incident and put up an adequate defense. In addition, red light cameras can collect license plate data from all drivers, not just those who commit infractions. This raises serious privacy concerns and, in today's era, can lead to abuse by the federal government; one of the largest providers of license plate reader databases in the country recently signed an agency-wide contract to give Immigration and Customs Enforcement access to the information it collects, which jeopardizes the safety and wellbeing of immigrants throughout the country. Racial justice concerns are also at issue due to placement of cameras in larger municipalities where higher concentrations of people of color live, meaning that people of color are disproportionately affected. This targeting is unfair and discriminatory. Moreover, there is no research to suggest that people of color

commit more motor vehicle infractions than other people, so this targeting does not make communities safer.

Many cities across the country have had issues with red light camera systems, and some have even abandoned the systems altogether because of the many problems they have encountered. Eight states (Maine, Mississippi, Montana, Nevada, New Hampshire, South Carolina, South Dakota, and West Virginia) prohibit the use of red light cameras in communities, and the number of communities using red-light cameras fell from 533 in 2012 to 430 in 2016, according to a 2017 report of the National Conference of State Legislatures. In Miami, city commissioners unanimously voted to stop using red light cameras in December of 2017, and the city of Rochester, New York stopped using its red light camera system in 2016 because it was disproportionately hurting people in low-income neighborhoods, according to the city's mayor. In California alone, 60 communities have stopped using red light cameras, due partly to the increases in traffic accidents they have caused. These communities have learned hard lessons about privatized, outsourced, for-profit, automated law enforcement, lessons that we need not repeat in Connecticut. They've learned that red light cameras enrich for-profit vendors and fail to provide the promised safety benefits and revenues for municipalities. In many places, they've also proven wildly unpopular with the public, who view them as a cynical cash grab.

The ACLU-CT and the NAACP are also opposed to speed cameras for many of the same reasons it opposes red light cameras. The same due process issue is in play with speed cameras, because the municipalities ticket the owner of the vehicle, not the person driving the speeding vehicle. The same privacy and immigrants' rights concerns raised by red light cameras are replicated with speed cameras, as speed cameras also rely on equipment that captures and retains license plate images. Though the bill does not identify which municipalities will be a part of the pilot project, speed cameras also raise racial justice concerns, as it can be assumed that municipalities with financial problems, many of which are larger municipalities that also have larger populations of people of color, will apply to be a part of the pilot program. Additionally, there are often calibration issues with speed cameras, meaning they could be calibrated incorrectly and may indicate that a driver is speeding when they are not.

We strongly urge the committee to oppose this bill, which jeopardizes public safety, racial justice, privacy, immigrants' rights, and due process rights in our state.