



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 356

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to adopt legislation permitting the installation of bus-mounted cameras to assist in the enforcement of bus lanes.

By Council Members Brewer, Comrie, James, Liu, Palma, Sanders Jr. and Stewart

Whereas, Technology can be utilized to enhance public safety, reduce and deter violations of the law, and discourage false complaints against the City of New York; and

Whereas, The City of New York has authorized the establishment of bus lanes, which are designated for the exclusive use of buses and which prohibit access and parking by other types of vehicles, in an effort to improve travel time and reliability of mass transit bus rides; and

Whereas, Specifically, pursuant to Section 4-08 of Title 34 of the Rules of the City of New York, no person shall stop, stand, or park a vehicle in a bus lane unless otherwise indicated by posted signs, markings or other traffic control devices, or at the direction of a law enforcement officer; and

Whereas, Additionally, pursuant to Section 4-12 of Title 34 of the Rules of the City of New York, when signs are erected giving notice of bus lane restrictions, motorists are prohibited from driving a vehicle other than a bus within a designated bus lane during the hours specified, except that a person may use the bus lane in order to make the first available right hand turn where permitted into a street, private road, private drive or an entrance to private property in a safe manner or when necessary to avoid conflict with other traffic or at the direction of a law enforcement officer; and

Whereas, However, the use of bus lanes by thoughtless, indifferent, or inconsiderate motorists creates the very congested conditions that the regulations regarding bus lanes are intended to prevent or, at the very least, prevents the advantages of bus lanes from being fully realized; and

Whereas, The use of bus-mounted cameras operating automatically is a potential solution to the problem of unauthorized use of bus lanes, because evidence of drivers violating the law would be captured on film and would enable the City of New York to hold motorists accountable in court; and

Whereas, According to the website of Jai Systems, a manufacturer of specialized security and traffic systems, including

video and alarm systems, an initiative using bus-mounted cameras has been implemented in London, which consists of two closed-circuit television cameras installed together in a secure and waterproof house adjacent to the rate and destination sign on the side of buses; and

Whereas, One camera is fitted with an angle lens to provide a general overview that allows enforcement personnel to assess the circumstances related to an alleged offense; and

Whereas, The second camera provides a detailed view of the bus lane, providing sufficient details to read the license plate of vehicles in the bus lane; and

Whereas, A “clock interface” generates a time and date display of the video image captured by the cameras, and the videotapes are collected approximately twice a week to be analyzed by control room personnel; and

Whereas, According to an article by Transportation Alternatives in the spring of 2004, entitled “Grannis Introduces Bus Enforcement Camera Bill,” the City of London at that time had 900 bus-mounted cameras and 500 roadside cameras and issued 100,000 summonses a year, resulting in dramatic increases in bus speeds and reductions in travel time; and

Whereas, The article stated that, because of reported success of the London program, Assembly Member Pete Grannis developed legislation in consultation with Transportation Alternatives and the Straphanger’s Campaign to carry out a similar initiative in New York City; and

Whereas, The bill would authorize the Metropolitan Transportation Authority and the New York City Department of Transportation to use automated bus-mounted and road-side cameras in issuing summonses to motorists illegally parked in bus stops or driving in bus lanes; and

Whereas, Assembly Member Grannis has reintroduced the legislation, which would create a demonstration project for bus lane enforcement cameras in certain cities, as Assembly Bill A.1832; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to adopt legislation permitting the installation of bus-mounted cameras to assist in the enforcement of bus lanes.

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