



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** Res 1417-2008, **Version:** \*

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### Res. No. 1417

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law to allow New York City to operate additional red light traffic cameras so that more cameras are available to cover intersections where there are a high number of traffic accidents.

By Council Members James, Avella, Brewer, Felder, Fidler, Gentile, Liu, Palma and Weprin

Whereas, According to the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration, more than 43,000 people were killed in motor vehicle crashes in the United States in 2005; and

Whereas, According to the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, 22 percent of all traffic accidents in the United States are caused by drivers running red lights and such accidents cost an estimated \$7 billion dollars in property damage, medical bills, lost productivity and insurance hikes; and

Whereas, According to a report issued in 2001 by the New York City Office of the Comptroller, motorists in New York City run 1.23 million red lights every workday, between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 7:00 p.m.; and

Whereas, Red light cameras help enforce traffic laws by automatically photographing vehicles disobeying stop lights; and

Whereas, The camera is triggered by any vehicle entering an intersection above a preset minimum speed, and it records the date, time of day, time elapsed since the beginning of the red signal, vehicle speed, and license plate, and tickets are typically mailed to the registered owners of the violating vehicles; and

Whereas, In 1993, New York City was the first city in the U.S. to employ red light cameras to detect and issue summonses to cars running red lights; and

Whereas, Since its inception, about twenty-two cities around the country have adopted the New York

City model to reduce traffic violations and accidents; and

Whereas, The use of red light cameras has proven to be effective in reducing the red light running violations and the number of red light running accidents; and

Whereas, A 2005 review of red light camera studies around the world concluded that cameras reduce red light violations by 40-50 percent and reduce injury crashes by 25-30 percent, and in that same year New York City issued 306,117 red light camera summonses and experienced a 34 percent decline in red light violations; and

Whereas, In 2006, Governor George Pataki signed a bill permitting the New York City Department of Transportation (DOT) to double the number of red light cameras from 50 to 100; and

Whereas, DOT currently rotates red light cameras among 175 intersections with high rates of accidents caused by running red lights, but 1,200 intersections account for half of the City's crashes, according to Transportation Alternatives; and

Whereas, According to a 2007 article in the *New York Post*, Iris Weinshall, former Commissioner of DOT, stated that while the program is extremely effective as a deterrent, there are not enough cameras to cover all of the City's approximately 12,000 intersections, and the City would like to install 1,000 cameras at intersections throughout the five boroughs; and Whereas, In order for the red light camera program to be more effective, the City requires approval from the State to permit DOT to install additional cameras to cover such intersections with high accident rates; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to amend the Vehicle and Traffic Law to allow New York City to operate additional red light traffic cameras so that more cameras are available to cover intersections where there are a high number of traffic accidents.

TC  
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9:47 am

