



MICHAEL REILLY  
 Assemblyman 62<sup>nd</sup> District

THE ASSEMBLY  
 STATE OF NEW YORK  
 ALBANY

RANKING MINORITY MEMBER  
 Committee on Cities  
 COMMITTEES  
 Aging  
 Alcoholism and Drug Abuse  
 Higher Education  
 Housing

July 11, 2019

Hon. Andrew Cuomo  
 Governor, State of New York  
 New York State Capitol,  
 Albany, New York 12224

Hon. Bill de Blasio  
 Mayor, City of New York  
 New York City Hall,  
 New York, New York 10007

Hon. Polly Trottenberg  
 Commissioner, NYC DOT  
 55 Waters Street,  
 New York, New York 10041

Hon. Carl Heastie  
 Speaker, State Assembly  
 New York State Capitol,  
 Albany, New York 12224

Hon. Andrea Stewart-Cousins  
 Majority Leader, State Senate  
 New York State Capitol,  
 Albany, New York 12224

Hon. Letitia James  
 Attorney General, State of New York  
 New York State Capitol,  
 Albany, New York 12224

Dear Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio, Speaker Heastie, Leader Stewart-Cousins, Attorney General James, and Commissioner Trottenberg:

I am writing to each of you in regard to the New York City school zone speed camera program, which was expanded by the State Legislature earlier this year and will increase the total number of mobile and stationary speed camera units from 140 to 750 to cover most of the city's school zones – at least that's how it was sold to my constituents, along with millions of your other New York City constituents and the media when the State Legislature deliberated on this legislation. I recently learned though that the New York City Department of Transportation has incorrectly interpreted this legislation in a way which would essentially permit them to install as many speed camera units as they would like – 2,000 citywide, to be exact, is what they have announced – in each and every one of those 750 school zones. This action is in direct conflict with the intent of the drafters and sponsors of this legislation.

I have absolutely no shame in admitting that I voted against the speed camera program's expansion when it came for a vote in the State Assembly. The truth is, I simply could not support the expansion of a program that has generated millions in additional funding for the City of New York – most of which is misused by city officials to support their pet projects – instead of being used to improve pedestrian safety in our school zones. I previously had the privilege of serving on Community Education Council 31 on Staten Island for almost a decade, and during that time I heard from parents and school administrators about the need for major improvements to pedestrian safety around school zones, sometimes requiring a capital project, but even minor requests, such as the need for additional crossing guards – there are even school zones that lack consistent sidewalk, forcing young children to walk in the street. These requests would frequently be denied because of their cost, yet the City of New York has collected millions in sustained revenue as a result of the speed camera program. Until real improvements are made in regard to pedestrian safety in school zones, my constituents and I will see this program as nothing more than a scheme to take our money. As a matter of fact, I suggest you review my legislation, A. 08232, which would specifically address that issue.

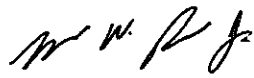
In regard to this egregious expansion of the speed camera program well beyond the extent permitted by law, I urge the Department of Transportation to pause. According to New York State Vehicle and Traffic Law 1180(b), a "school speed zone" shall mean a distance not to exceed 1,320 feet on a highway passing a school building, entrance or exit of a school abutting the highway; however, under this new law, a "school speed zone" shall mean a radial distance of 1320 feet from a school building – what this means is that each speed camera unit placed

represents one school speed zone, and that the total number of school zone speed camera units in operation at any one time is limited to just 750.

This is extremely important to my constituency and I can imagine that it is also important to many of yours. That is why I am prepared to seek an injunction in this matter to ensure that the law is enforced so as to be consistent with the legislative intent. You see, we are elected to represent the values and views of our constituents to the best of our ability, but how can we do that when the legislation considered by the legislature and signed by the executive is not presented with truth or interpreted the correct way?

I appreciate the attention you all have given to this letter and hope we can find a solution. If you have any questions, or would like to speak with me directly, please do not hesitate to contact me at my district office by calling (718) 967-5194.

Yours in Service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "M. W. Reilly". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent "M" and "R".

Michael Reilly  
Member of Assembly  
62<sup>nd</sup> District