City of Columbus, Ohio
Department of Public Safety
Division of Police

February 2006

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MISSION STATEMENT

A. The Traffic Bureau’s primary mission is the safe movement of pedestrian and vehicular traffic on city streets and freeways. To accomplish this mission, Traffic Bureau personnel are responsible for the following activities dependent on their assignment:

1. Direction and control of traffic in the downtown area.

2. Follow-up investigation of hit-skip and fatal accidents.

3. Investigates Division of Police vehicle accidents.

4. Investigates school bus violations and felony traffic violations.

5. Enforcement of traffic laws on city streets and freeways, responding promptly to citizen reports of traffic problems in residential and business areas and on the City’s freeway system, following established Quick-Clearance principles.

6. Assisting stranded motorists.

7. Providing assistance to other Bureaus during civil disturbances and special events.

8. To oversee the Columbus Focus on Safety Program, which is an automated photo red light enforcement application of problematic intersections throughout the City of Columbus.

B. To fulfill these responsibilities, the Traffic Bureau officers are trained in the use of electronic speed measuring devices and other specialized equipment beneficial to effective traffic control.
**Problem**

Everyday hundreds of motorists run red lights in Columbus, Ohio. With more than 1,100 signalized intersections in Columbus, this creates a serious safety problem.

When traffic laws are disobeyed, drivers endanger themselves and others.

Crashes occur when drivers speed up to “beat the light” in anticipation of the light changing to RED, instead of slowing down to make a safe stop.

**STOP RUNNING RED LIGHTS**

**Consequences**

Each year more than 1,758 persons are injured in Columbus, Ohio due to drivers running red lights.\(^1\)

More than 3,800 vehicles are damaged each year in Columbus, Ohio due to red light running.\(^2\)

Red light running costs central Ohio millions of dollars each year. It cost our nation over $7 billion on an average each year.\(^3\)

**Solution**

The City of Columbus formed a committee from various areas of city government to address the red light running problem. The “Columbus Focus on Safety Program” is designed to dramatically reduce red light running by using the below listed formula:

- **Education** - In cooperation with the Columbus Health Department, numerous presentations were given throughout the city, which included newspaper and television coverage.

- **Engineering** - Engineers from the Columbus Transportation Division reviewed traffic crash data. Problematic intersections were investigated to determine what could be done to make the intersection safer. They reviewed the yellow signal timing and conducted a physical examination of possible lane changes.

- **Enforcement** - Once identified as a problematic intersection, i.e. numerous accidents, citations issued for red lights, etc., the Columbus Division of Police used traditional enforcement methods to address the safety issues. The City of Columbus has now chosen automatic red light enforcement as a supplement and aid to traditional enforcement. Therefore, photo red light cameras are being placed at those intersections with highest incidents of red light running crashes.
Ordinance

Columbus City Code, Chapter 2115, was enacted to provide for the implementation of a Photo Red Light Traffic Enforcement System.

Citation

The registered owner of a vehicle photographed running a red light will receive, by U.S. mail, a citation for $95.00. Citations will include digital images imprinted with the date, time, location, and lane of travel. Only the Columbus Division of Police will authorize citations.

When a citation is received, the City of Columbus encourages violators to view the infraction via the Internet at www.photonotice.com. The citation number, license plate number and City code: COLMBS must be entered. After review there are three options:

I. PAY THE FINE

   - Instructions for payment are included on the citation coupon.

II. NOMINATE ANOTHER DRIVER

   - If the registered owner of the vehicle cited was not the driver at the time of the violation, the citation coupon can be used to nominate another person including their address. A citation will be mailed to them.
   
   - It is important to remember the registered owner of the vehicle is still responsible for the civil action if the person nominated fails to pay the fine within the allotted time.

III. REQUEST A HEARING

   - If a hearing is requested, fill out the appropriate portion of the citation coupon and send it to: The Columbus Division of Police Traffic Bureau 120 Marconi Blvd. Columbus, Ohio 43215-2838

If you receive a citation:

   - The Bureau of Motor Vehicles will not be contacted. No points will be assessed to a driving record.
   - Insurance companies will not be contacted.
Traffic Camera Program

The City of Columbus is currently installing photo-red light cameras at 13 of the City’s high-risk intersections. When all installations are complete the cameras will monitor the following intersections:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Locations</th>
<th>Direction Approaches</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cleveland Ave. &amp; Spring St.</td>
<td>N/B &amp; S/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. N. 4th St. &amp; E. 5th Ave.</td>
<td>E/B &amp; W/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. S. Central Ave. &amp; Sullivant Ave.</td>
<td>S/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. N. 4th St. &amp; Mt. Vernon/Nationwide</td>
<td>N/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. S. 3rd St. &amp; E. Fulton St.</td>
<td>S/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Chittenden Ave. &amp; Summit St.</td>
<td>S/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. E. Broad St. &amp; Grant Ave.</td>
<td>E/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. E. Livingston Ave. &amp; Fairwood Ave.</td>
<td>E/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Henderson Rd. &amp; Gettysburg Rd.</td>
<td>E/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. E. Broad St. &amp; S. 3rd St.</td>
<td>E/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. W. Broad St. &amp; Sylvan Ave.</td>
<td>E/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. E. Town St. &amp; S. 4th St.</td>
<td>W/B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. S. 3rd St. &amp; E. Main St.</td>
<td>S/B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A 30-day grace period is designed to give drivers who live, work or travel through the area a chance to adjust to the use of the cameras; thereafter, the City of Columbus will begin issuing citations.

(Footnotes)
1 Governor’s Highway Safety Office, 2000
2 Governor’s Highway Safety Office, 2000
3 National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, 2004
Digital SMARTCAMred Camera Systems ONLY trigger during the red light signal phase.
The Camera Systems record:
• Three separate images for each red light violation, and
• The date, time, time into the red cycle, location code, detected vehicle speed and posted speed limit for each violation.
The Camera System imprints this data onto the Databar which is displayed at the top of all three images. (See example Databar below)
Each Camera System consists of a Main Camera to provide rear-shot images of the vehicle and a zoomed image of its rear license plate.
The Main Camera is connected to the traffic signal controller and detection sensors. During the green and amber signal phases the camera is not active. It ONLY becomes active AFTER a delay period from the start of the red signal phase.
When the sensors detect a violation, the Main Camera triggers.
The First Image shows the vehicle just behind the stop bar with the traffic signal already red. The Second Image is activated when the vehicle has proceeded through the intersection during the red phase (therefore displaying a red light violation).
The Plate Camera captures the rear license plate of the violating vehicle. The plate-shot is triggered to occur at an optimal distance for plate image quality.
The System uses encryption to safeguard the image evidence against alteration. At the scene, the System gives each image and its data a unique signature to confirm its authentic status. Public key cryptography and additional encryption processes secure the transmission process.

Databar Description:
1. Location of Violation
2. Date and Time of Violation
3. Duration, in seconds, that the traffic signal was red at the time of the violation
CITY OF COLUMBUS, OHIO
FOCUS ON SAFETY
PHOTO ENFORCEMENT PROGRAM
NOTICE OF LIABILITY

NOTICE NUMBER CORNNNNNNNN

The City of Columbus has a red light photo enforcement program in effect to reduce the number of red light running violations. As you can see from the photos to the right, a vehicle registered in your name and described below appears to have run a red light.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DATE OF VIOLATION:</th>
<th>TIME OF VIOLATION:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NAME (First, Middle, Last)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDRESS (Street, Apt #)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
<th>STATE</th>
<th>ZIP</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VEH. LIC. NO.</td>
<td>STATE</td>
<td>VEH. YEAR</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAKE</td>
<td>BODY STYLE</td>
<td>REG. YEAR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| FINE AMOUNT |
| $95.00 |
| DESCRIPTION |
| Automated Traffic Control Photographic System Red Light Violation |

LOCATION OF VIOLATION

YOU MUST RESPOND TO THIS NOTICE ON OR BEFORE:

DATE:

REGISTERED OWNER (First, Middle, Last)

ADDRESS (Street, Apt #)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY</th>
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<th>ZIP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

PLEASE NOTE THATRecordedImages DO CONSTITUTE EVIDENCE OF A VIOLATION OF THE COLUMBUS CITY CODE CHAPTER 2115.

THIS VIOLATION WAS NOT COMMITTED IN MY PRESENCE. BASED UPON MY REVIEW AND INSPECTION OF THERecordedImages, I STATE THAT A VIOLATION OF THE COLUMBUS CITY CODE CHAPTER 2115 DID OCCUR.

I DECLARE UNDER PEnALTY OF PERJURY UNDER THE LAWS OF THE STATE OF OHIO THE FOREGOING IS TRUE AND CORRECT.

DATE ISSUED COLUMBUS POLICE OFFICER BADGE NO.

Note: As the registered owner of the vehicle described in this Notice, you are responsible for paying this fine by [insert respond-by date]. Failure to respond to this notice will result in $25.00 penalty fee.
1. **Reason You Received This Notice:**
A vehicle registered in your name was photographed running a red light or the registered owner of the vehicle depicted on this Notice has submitted an Affidavit naming you as the driver of the vehicle at the time of the violation. This is a violation of the Columbus City Code Chapter 2115 (Photo Traffic Enforcement System).

2. **You Must Select One of the Following Options.** Complete the coupon on the Options Page for the option you select and return the coupon in the enclosed envelope. Make sure the mailing address on the reverse side of the coupon appears in the window of the enclosed envelope.

   **A. Payment Methods.** As the registered owner or nominated driver of the vehicle described in this Notice, we have no choice but to hold you responsible for paying this fine by [insert respond-by date]. No points will be assessed to your driving record and no record of this violation will be sent to your insurance company or the Bureau of Motor Vehicles. Of course, if you were not the driver at the time of the violation, you may choose to complete the Affidavit on Option B of the mail-in coupon on Page 2 of this Notice and indicate who was driving.

   - Please do not send cash.
   - Make Check or Money Order payable to “Columbus Focus on Safety Program”.
   - Payments by Personal Check, Money Order or Visa/MasterCard are accepted. Please mail in the enclosed envelope along with the payment coupon found on Option A of page 2.
   - **Credit Card payments can also be made online at:** www.photonotice.com. (Enter city code: COLMBS).
   - A $25.00 administrative fee will be assessed for rejected or declined payments.

   **B. Affidavit: Identify another Driver, Vehicle Sold or Stolen.** It is sufficient evidence of the Columbus City Code Chapter 2115, that the person registered as the owner of the vehicle was operating the vehicle at the time of the violation. However, liability of the owner may be removed if the Affidavit of Non-Responsibility (Option B of the mail in coupon on page 2) is completed and returned within the enclosed envelope by [insert respond-by date]. You may mail or fax the Affidavit of Non-Responsibility in the enclosed envelope to the Columbus Division Police 120 Marconi Blvd Columbus, Ohio 43215. Fax # 614-645-1645.

   - If the vehicle was sold prior to the date of violation, please include a copy of the transfer of sale along with the Affidavit of Non-Responsibility.
   - If the vehicle or license plate was reported stolen at the time of the violation, please submit a copy of the police report along with the Affidavit of Non-Responsibility.
   - No record of this violation will be sent to your insurance company or to the Bureau of Motor Vehicles.

   **C. Right to a Hearing.** To schedule a hearing and have the matter reviewed by a Hearing Officer you must follow the instructions for Options 1 and 2 below:

   1. Complete Option A (Payment Coupon on page 2) and mail along with a bond payment of $95.00 in the enclosed envelope to the Columbus Focus on Safety Program Payment Center PO. Box 76731 Cleveland, OH 44101-6500. **You must post the bond in order to schedule a hearing.**
   2. Complete Option C (Request for Hearing Coupon on page 2) and mail to the Columbus Division of Police 120 Marconi Blvd Columbus, Ohio 43215-2838 [insert respond-by date]. Please include your phone number. You will be notified of a date and time to appear.
   3. Hearings are held at the Columbus Division of Police 120 Marconi Blvd Columbus, OH 43215.
   4. **IF YOUR HEARING REQUEST IS NOT RECEIVED BY** [insert the respond-by date], **YOU WILL FORFEIT YOUR RIGHT TO A HEARING.**
   5. If found not responsible, your bond payment in the amount of $95.00 will be refunded.

3. **View Violation on the Internet**
   - The violation has been captured on video and is available to be viewed on the Internet at: www.photonotice.com (Enter City Code: COLMBS).
   - If you do not have access to a computer, computers are available at the Public Libraries. Please refer to your phone book for the library most convenient to you.
   - You may also view the images and video at the Columbus Division of Police 120 Marconi Blvd Columbus, Ohio 43215. Call 614-645-4661 ext. 6611 to schedule an appointment. You will be notified of a date and time to appear.

For questions regarding payment, contact the Columbus Focus on Safety Program Customer Service Call Center toll free at 1-877-847-2338 between 9:00am and 4:00pm (MST).