

**Testimony to the NYC Council Transportation Committee  
Rita Barravecchio, Families for Safe Streets Member  
August 28, 2018**

My name is Rita Barravecchio and I am sadly a new member of Families for Safe Streets. Just two months ago, on June 25th, my 17-year-old niece, Maddie Sershen was hit and killed by reckless driver in Queens, right in front of an elementary school. My life and my family's lives were ripped apart. Maddie's mom, my sister, had her heart ripped into thousands of pieces that will never be able to be put back together again. The pain, sadness and heartache is still so raw. My nieces, nephews and my own children have a hole in their heart that will never be repaired. Their tears are like knives stabbing the heart, and there is nothing I can say or do to take away the pain. No mom should have to explain to her 8-year-old son that he will never see his cousin again.

These kids never had a chance to say goodbye, or to hug Maddie one more time, or to tell her how much she means to them. Maddie will never have the opportunity to get her license, or to go to prom, graduate high school, or go to college. She will never experience dorm life or a marriage proposal, never experience childbirth or buying her own home. Her life was ended way too soon.

Speed safety cameras save lives. Turning them back on is a no-brainer. Speeding and fatalities have been drastically reduced in places where there are cameras and many fewer people are dying in crashes citywide. It is a disgrace that the NYS Senate's petty politics is putting the lives of our children in danger. I am

grateful that the Governor, Mayor and City Council are stepping in to turn the speed safety cameras back on.

This measure will save lives and prevent other from living the terrible nightmare that our family will never wake up from.

City Council Testimony- Tuesday August 28, 2018

By: Sofia Russo- Mother of Ariel Marina Russo (March 10, 2009-June 4, 2013)

**RE: A Local Law to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to imposing liability on vehicle owners for failure to comply with maximum speed limits in school speed zones**

CHAPTER 9 - PHOTO SPEED VIOLATION MONITORING PROGRAM

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013, my family and I learned the ultimate lesson about how speeding in New York City can end the life of a child and completely shatter an entire family; crushing all the hopes, dreams, and plans you thought you had for your future. On that Tuesday morning, my 4-year-old daughter, Ariel Marina Russo, was walking to school hand-in-hand with my mother. It was 8:15 am when they were waiting on the sidewalk for the pedestrian traffic light to give them the signal to cross. The police report said that a driver made a left turn at 35 miles per hour on 97<sup>th</sup> street and Amsterdam Avenue when he lost control and drove up onto the sidewalk right where my little girl waited with my mother. I remember when I got the call at work from the officer letting me know that my daughter and my mother had been hit by a reckless driver. I remember the moment he said it, denial set in and I tried to imagine something minor leaving them with just scrapes and bruises. *"Maybe the car just bumped into them ever so gently and made them fall down and now they're in the ER getting checked because that's protocol."* But in the pit of my stomach I could feel that this was way more serious and so I asked the police officer to tell me her heart beats per minute and when he said 30, my legs gave out, I was on the floor and I couldn't breathe. I couldn't hear anything because I knew that my daughter's little heart was giving out as we spoke. When I got to the hospital my husband was hysterical trying to break a hand sanitizer off the wall and I knew she was gone.

Going home that night without our baby girl was excruciating, heart-breaking, incomprehensible. Our apartment had her written all over it: her Barbie dream house, her Baby Alive doll, the clothes she hand-made for her small stuffed animals from her socks, her art work on the refrigerator, her clothes and shoes all over, and on her bed -- the rainbow build-a-bear she had just made. We had to live with a constant sick feeling, like we had poison in us. Our son asked us where Ariel was every single day. When we told him she was in Heaven,

he responded, "Maybe she's just playing hide-and-seek because that's her favorite game" and he'd look around under the table, in the closets, behind the doors. He did this every day for about six months and we had to start therapy for our 3-year-old because we didn't know what to do.

As for my mother, she was in critical condition, required multiple major surgeries, and had to spend one month in the hospital. She is still in the process of recovering from her injuries today.

I never want this to happen to anyone, ever. I don't want other parents and grandparents to feel this. I don't want other siblings to go through this. One year after Ariel's death, I became a founding member of Families for Safe Streets because as someone who knows this loss and this pain, I believe I owe it to all New Yorkers, to all children who walk to school, and to my daughter, Ariel, to do whatever it takes to prevent this from happening to another child, to another family. This is why I stand here before you all today, pouring my heart and soul out, re-telling my darkest experience. Because even though it hurts to re-live this agony, you need to know what I know about speeding in NYC, so that together, we can change the culture of dangerous driving and save lives.

We have gathered and analyzed the data about the 140 speed safety cameras that have been in NYC school zones as part of a pilot program since 2014. We know they reduce speeding, we know they change driver behavior, and we know they save lives. I believe that just as I have been called into action, so have you, as our elected officials. Please protect our children as they walk to and from school. Increase driver accountability and pedestrian safety in school zones by voting to amend the administrative code of the city of New York, in relation to imposing liability on vehicle owners for failure to comply with maximum speed limits in school speed zones with the implementation of the photo speed violation monitoring program. To those who oppose this program, I say: if you do not want to receive a speeding ticket, do not speed, *especially* not in front of a school.

As a mother who lost a child to speeding, as a street-safety advocate, and as an Assistant Principal at a New York City public school, I sincerely thank you for the opportunity to bring you this testimony. I pray no parent will have reason to repeat it.

**Testimony to the NYC Council Transportation Committee  
Debbie Kahn, Families for Safe Streets Member  
August 28, 2018**

My only child is dead. Nothing that you do today will ever bring him back to me-- but we'll never know the countless lives that you will save by having come up with this solution to reinstate the speed safety cameras. When my son Seth was killed by a reckless driver, I knew that life as I knew it would never be the same. The driver was speeding through the crosswalk while my son was simply walking across the street. There were no speed safety cameras then that would help slow down drivers, so my sweet, smart, kind, generous, helpful, charismatic, funny and talented child Seth became a statistic in the epidemic of traffic violence. We members of Families for Safe Streets know all too well, what the epidemic of traffic violence does to families and how it rips us apart—our lives are ruined, destroyed. Our planned futures, hopes and dreams for our children are now turned into nightmares.

Just this weekend, we endured yet another family wedding. As the groom's mother danced with her son, I cried along with my husband—as those around us smiled, applauded and cheered. We live in our own personal Hell that hopefully most of you will never have to suffer.

Traffic violence is an emergency. Someone is killed every 38 hours. Every 6 minutes someone in NYC is injured. Thousands of these are life-altering injuries. As a member of the FSS Steering Committee, I hear horror stories every day from people seeking help or needing support.

Speed cameras work - the data is clear: Speeding is down 63% and fatalities 55% in places where there are cameras. They are helping change the culture of reckless driving. Overall NYC fatalities are down 29% and up 15% in the rest of the country. Each number is not just a statistic, this is about real human beings that once lived and breathed and meant something to someone. Life is sacred, life is precious, lives must be protected.

On Sunday evening, I posted the very exciting news on our FSS Facebook page and Twitter feed that the life-saving speed safety cameras at NYC schools will operate again starting September 4th . We've so far reached well over 3,200 people with this news story, and the comments and re-postings are far-reaching and grateful. I too wish to thank you for coming up with this brilliant plan to reinstate the speed safety cameras—something that took a herculean effort on so many peoples parts.

Our purpose now is to fight so that no one else will suffer as we do. I urge you to pass this bill. But that should not be all. There is no good reason why we are restricting these life-saving speed cameras to just schools. The lives of our loved ones are at stake, and I urge you with all of my heart, for all of us, to do whatever is in your power to allow speed safety cameras to operate whenever, and wherever, they are needed.

Thank you.

**Testimony to the NYC Council Transportation Committee**  
**Jane Martin-Lavaud, Families for Safe Streets Member**  
**August 28, 2018**

Traffic violence is hardly a new phenomenon. Growing up I was well aware that my grandfather, Benjamin Kanter, had been struck and killed by a reckless driver when I was a mere infant. I later learned that my great-grandfather, Haiman Chalfin, had also been struck and killed by a reckless driver. That's quite a heavy toll for one family to bear. In addition, I lost a dear friend and father figure when Irwin Meyer, director of the Kings County American Legion Band in which I played for a dozen years or so, was struck by a vehicle, dying two days later at the age of 96.

Over the years I have lost my grandmother, numerous aunts and uncles, and my parents, all of whom I loved and miss dearly. But none of my family history or personal losses could prepare me for the news that I received on the morning of January 5, 2013, when two police officers arrived at my door and informed me that my daughter, Leonora Lavaud, had been killed in a car crash along with two other people during the night. I don't know how many times I repeated the word "no." "No, that isn't possible. No, it can't be. No, there must be some mistake. No, not my daughter. No, not my baby! Noooooo!"

I waited two hours for my husband to come home to share the news with him before I woke up my younger daughter Chumani and broke the news to her.

Then the nightmare began. A trip to the morgue to identify the body (no one

should have to see their child in a body bag), meetings with reporters at Leonora's apartment and at the site of the crash, trying to wrap my brain around how a speeding vehicle had crashed into another car carrying my daughter, the two spinning around and hurtling into parked cars, ultimately slamming into an oncoming bus, wondering which of the impacts had caused the death of my child and whether or not it was immediate. Later in the week, another identification of my beautiful daughter laid out so peacefully, as if sleeping, in a casket. The receipt of a death certificate on my birthday.

The last two times that I saw Leonora alive were on Christmas, when we shared a meal that we had all shopped for and cooked together in her new apartment, and on New Year's Eve, 2012. The last time I spoke with her was in the afternoon of what would turn out to be the last day of her life. We were discussing withdrawing funds for tuition for the upcoming semester at Brooklyn College. My last words to her were, "I love you."

Five and a half years later, not a day goes by without one or several reminders that my daughter is gone. We just celebrated what would have been her 30th birthday, but she was not here to join us. Many of her friends turned 30 this year. They have all graduated, and many have married and begun families of their own. But we have to live through the numerous markers each year, birthdays, holidays, vacations, without her, wondering what she would be up to if she were still here.

We know that drivers who receive tickets for speeding largely do not repeat the offense. And we know that in a period of merely two weeks no fewer than 132,000 drivers sped past speed cameras with no penalties. We have a choice. We can let speeding drivers continue to put all of our lives at risk and go unpunished for their recklessness, or we can give them a modest slap on the wrist and change the culture of driving in NYC and beyond.

**SPEED CAMERAS SAVE LIVES.**

We must renew and expand the speed safety camera program to protect New York City's schoolchildren and communities so that no other family has to experience such a devastating loss as I, and so many members of Families for Safe Streets, have suffered.

Testimony to the NYC Council Transportation Committee  
**Lizi Rahman, Families for Safe Streets Member**  
August 28, 2018

My name is Lizi Rahman, I am one of the founder members of the Families for Safe Streets. Today, I am here to show my support for the Speed Camera bill, because I strongly believe that this bill is designed to save lives.

Before I get into the details, I would like you to know **why I am here**. I have lost my son, Asif Rahman, in a car crash. My son, a vibrant, talented young man, was hit and killed on Queens Boulevard on his way home from work by a reckless speeding truck driver. The driver hit his bicycle from behind and then drove his truck over him by killing him instantly. All his organs were crushed. **The truck driver not only crushed his organs, he crushed all his dreams and hopes**. He wanted to be a music teacher, planned to release his music CD.

After this tragic loss, **our house became as silent as a grave**. There's no laughter, no sound of beatboxing, no calling out loud, 'Hi Mom'. His voice is stopped forever. The truck driver just didn't kill Asif, he killed all of us as well. It's a pain which kills you like a slow poison. It hurts me when I think I will not see him graduate from college, getting married, having a family like most of his friends. The truck driver didn't only crush Asif's hopes and dreams for future, he crushed my hopes and dreams for future as well.

It's been ten years, that I have lost my son, from that day on, I **made it my mission to make New York City streets safer, and this is what kept me going**. I found a new meaning of survival by saving lives of others. I do not want any other mother going through the pain of losing a child. I try to attend as many events as

Testimony to the NYC Council Transportation Committee  
**Lizi Rahman, Families for Safe Streets Member**  
August 28, 2018

possible to raise awareness for street safety, so that our children will not die on our streets.

**I strongly believe speed cameras will ensure that the drivers drive with caution and lives are saved.** Drivers and owners should be held accountable for the safety of our streets. We know that speed cameras have helped reducing deaths and injuries on our streets. Overall fatalities are down to 28% in New York City. There is no doubt that through more implementation of speed cameras, the data will go down even more.

I want the council **not to think of numbers when it comes to a fatality. I want you to think of a person, think about their loving families**, think how these deaths impacted their families and communities. Think that today it may be someone else's child or spouse or sibling, in the future it could be your family member, and consider how you should vote.

Thank you.

**NYC DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TESTIMONY  
HEARING BEFORE THE CITY COUNCIL  
COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION  
August 28, 2018**

Good afternoon Speaker Johnson, Chair Rodriguez, and members of the Transportation Committee. I am Polly Trottenberg, Commissioner of the New York City Department of Transportation. With me today is Director of Traffic Operations Policy Juan Martinez, and we are joined by NYPD Transportation Chief Thomas Chan. We are pleased to be here on behalf of Mayor Bill de Blasio to testify in strong support of the Preconsidered Introduction regarding school speed cameras before you today. This legislation will allow us to re-activate our life-saving school speed cameras in time for the start of school, in the wake of the failure of the New York State Senate to re-authorize and expand the program.

I want to start by thanking all of those who have fought on behalf of this program: the Council, particularly Speaker Johnson and Chair Rodriguez, the Mayor, the Governor, our allies in the State legislature, and the large coalition of advocates, led by those who have lost loved ones to traffic crashes. Thank you to the Council for holding this important emergency hearing and for working as quickly as possible with this Administration and the Governor to ensure the program is operating again by the start of school.

The Mayor stands ready to issue a message of necessity to ensure the Council can act in a timely manner on the legislation being considered today. And if passed, the Mayor will sign this legislation, allowing us to once again issue speed camera violations to any driver exceeding the speed limit by more than 10 mph in a school speed zone while school is in session. At DOT, we stand ready to re-activate our existing cameras on September 5<sup>th</sup>, the first day of school.

As you have heard me testify multiple times and as Margaret Forgione, DOT's COO, testified earlier this month along with Chief Chan and their colleagues, we know that these cameras work. Speeding is a leading cause of fatalities and speed cameras are a fundamental part of our Vision Zero toolkit for reducing deaths and serious injuries on New York City streets.

At a time when traffic fatalities have risen 15 percent nationally over the last four years, New York City is bucking the trend, with Vision Zero bringing fatalities down 26 percent over the same time period. And this year we are on track to see fatalities decline yet again. These are not just numbers—they are our families, friends, co-workers, neighbors, and fellow New Yorkers.

New York City's speed camera program was first established as a pilot by New York State in 2013. The goal was to determine whether the program would be effective, and whether the City could run the program fairly. At this point five years later the results are clear and unequivocal: Speed cameras provide predictable and consistent enforcement of the speed limit, which encourages drivers to maintain a safer speed, and that in turn reduces crashes, injuries and deaths. And as we testified earlier this month, the City administers the program in a fair and data-driven manner, with the emphasis always on safety.

Our data show that at schools with fixed cameras, speeding violations drop by 63 percent. DOT analysis shows that through December 2016, there were 17 percent fewer pedestrians, motorists, and cyclists injured in traffic crashes each year at schools with fixed cameras, and 21 percent fewer fatal and severe injuries, annually.

As DOT testified previously, major streets with speed cameras in every borough saw dramatic safety improvements since their arrival. From the date cameras were installed on a given corridor through the most recent data we have observed:

- On Ocean Parkway, speeding declined 63 percent and 32 percent fewer people were injured.
- On Grand Concourse, speeding declined 83 percent and 22 percent fewer people were injured.
- On Union Turnpike, speeding declined 80 percent and 43 percent fewer people were injured.
- On 10<sup>th</sup> Ave in Manhattan, speeding declined 83 percent and 26 percent fewer people were injured.
- On Forest Ave in Staten Island, speeding declined 27 percent and 35 percent fewer people were injured.

And speed cameras have a lasting effect on driver behavior. During the two-year period between the start of the program in 2014 and 2016, just over 80 percent of vehicles that received one violation from a speed camera did not receive another. That means drivers got the message and were deterred from future speeding by one \$50 ticket.

But already since we have stopped being able to issue violations at 120 out of 140 school locations we have seen over 330,000 instances of vehicles speeding 11 m.p.h. or more over the speed limit, in a school zone, at the time of day schools would be open.

As a City it is our responsibility to do all we can, using a data-driven approach and every tool at our disposal, to save lives and achieve the Vision Zero goal of eliminating traffic fatalities and serious injuries. Faced with State Senate inaction, this new, proposed law, and the actions this Administration will take to carry it out, live up to that responsibility by ensuring that the predictable and consistent enforcement provided by speed cameras continues to save lives.

On behalf of the de Blasio Administration, I would like to thank the City Council and the Speaker for their partnership and now we would be happy to take any questions.



August 28, 2018

## **Hearing on School-Based Speed Safety Cameras in New York City (T2018-2728)**

*Testimony before the New York City Council Committee on Transportation*

*Testimony by Marco Conner, Legislative & Legal Director, Transportation Alternatives*

Thank you Speaker Johnson, Committee Chair Rodriguez and Council Members, for your tenacity and commitment to protecting New Yorkers by introducing this speed enforcement legislation and holding today's hearing. For 45 years Transportation Alternatives has advocated on behalf of New Yorkers for safer, more inclusive and more livable streets. With more than 150,000 people in our network and over 1,000 activists throughout all five boroughs we fight to promote biking, walking, and public transportation as alternatives to the car. Helping to create a city with zero deaths or serious injuries, free from speeding, is part of our work and our vision.

Today I am also representing the EverySchool Coalition for Speed Safety Cameras. This coalition not only strongly supports your life-affirming actions today to re-activate our city's speed safety cameras, we encourage you to use your authority to allow operation of the cameras whenever and wherever needed to protect other New Yorkers, at the very least to do so at every school and every senior center.

The EverySchool Coalition consists of more than 300 schools, parent-teacher associations, nearly every major hospital in NYC, doctors, school crossing guards, religious institutions, child welfare organizations, disability rights groups, major businesses, four district attorneys and many more institutions in New York City.

We need speed safety cameras because traffic violence is a public health crisis that takes lives and affects the safety, well-being and health of all New Yorkers. Between 2010 and 2014 more than 16,000 people were either killed or severely injured in traffic on NYC streets. Every year more than 50,000 people are injured and every 38 hours someone dies in a traffic crash. Since 2013 at least 48 children have died in traffic crashes in our city. And just last year alone, 51 seniors were killed by motor vehicle drivers while walking, representing nearly half of all pedestrian fatalities in 2017.



TRANSPORTATION  
ALTERNATIVES

## Youth

Art For A Start, NY  
Bronx Helpers After-School Program  
Chai Tots Preschool  
Children's Aid Society  
The Child Center of NY  
The Children's Village  
Chinese Hawaiian Kenpo Academy  
Citizens' Committee for Children of NY  
Cub Scout Pack 174  
Eden II Programs  
I Challenge Myself  
Injury Free Coalition for Kids  
Ivy Day School  
Leake and Watts Services (Rising Ground)  
Graham Windham

Grand St. Settlement  
Girl Scout Troop 3205  
Girl Scout Troop 3257  
Girl Scout Troop 3258  
Girl Scout Troop 4088  
Girl Scout Troop 4089  
Kidical Mass  
Kids Ride Club  
M'kekado School of Karate  
Mosholu Montefiore Community Center  
Phipps Neighborhoods  
THE POINT Community Development Corporation  
Sporting Club Gjøa Youth Soccer  
Sunnyside Artworks  
Wingspan Arts, Inc.

## Associations, Businesses and Organizations

AR Walker & Company.  
Academy for Careers in Television & Film  
Aeon Martial Arts  
Appalachian Mountain Club New York-North Jersey Chapter  
The Architects Council of New York (ACNY)  
Asociación de Mujeres Progresistas  
B.R.A.K.E.S. Bay Ridge Brooklyn  
Bedford Stuyvesant Restoration Corporation  
Big Reuse  
Bike New York  
Biking Public Project  
Broadway Housing Communities  
The Broadway Mall Association  
The Bronx Museum of the Arts  
Bronx River Alliance  
BronxWorks  
The Brooklyn Historical Society  
Brooklyn Arts Exchange  
Brooklyn Heights Association  
Brownsville Community Justice Center  
Brownsville Partnership  
Caldwell Enrichment Programs, Inc  
CHEKPEDS  
CIVITAS  
Coalition for a Livable West Side  
Community League of the Heights  
Cooper Stock's Way  
Cyprus Hill Local Development Corp.  
Dutch Kills Central  
Easy Español  
Families for Safe Streets  
Five Borough Bike Club

Friends of Bushwick Inlet Park  
Friends of Morningside Park  
Friends of Stryker Park  
Generation Q - Queens House  
Get Women Cycling  
Gray Panthers NYC  
Groundswell  
Harlem Mothers S.A.V.E.  
HENRY's Restaurant  
Information for Action  
Institute for Rational Urban Mobility  
InTandem  
Inwood Canoe Club  
Island Voice  
J. Liff Co.  
Jackson Democratic Club  
JCC Manhattan  
JCC of Staten Island  
Jewish Voice for Peace - New York City  
Jews for Racial and Economic Justice  
Kingsbridge Heights Community Center  
Kips Bay Neighborhood Alliance  
Lincoln Square Neighborhood Center  
Long Island Streets  
L.I.C. Community Boathouse  
Make Brooklyn Safer  
Make Queens Safer  
Maple Street Community Garden  
NAG - Neighbors Allied for Good Growth  
New York Bicycling Coalition  
New York Bike Lawyers  
New York Cycle Club  
New Settlement Apartment Houses - Bronx



TRANSPORTATION  
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The New York Flyers  
New York Walkers Club  
New Yorkers for Parks  
NYC Mechanical Gardens Bike Coop  
Nikhil Badlani Foundation  
The Noguchi Museum  
The North Star Neighborhood Association  
Northern Manhattan Improvement Corp. (NMIC)  
Partnership for After School Education  
Park Slope Civic Council  
Park Slope Neighbors  
Park Slope Street Safety Partnership  
Pomonok Senior Center  
Presbyterian Senior Services (PSS)  
Project for Public Spaces  
Prospect Heights Neighborhood Dev. Council  
Prospect Lefferts Gardens Neighborhood Assn.  
Queens Bike Initiative  
Queens Community House  
Queensboro Hill Flushing Civic Association  
Redbeard Bikes  
Recycle-A-Bicycle  
Rego Park Alliance

Safe Roads Alliance  
Sara D. Roosevelt Park Coalition  
Silver Lake Park Conservancy  
Socrates Sculpture Park  
South Bronx Overall Economic Dev. Corp. (SoBRO)  
Staten Island Athletic Club  
Staten Island Bicycle Association  
Staten Island MakerSpace  
StartUp Box #SouthBronx  
StreetsAcademy  
The 145th Street Alliance  
Transportation Alternatives  
Tri-State Transportation Campaign  
Vaccaro & White  
Veselka  
WE Bike NYC (Women's Empowerment through Bicycles)  
Weeksville Heritage Center  
West 75th Street Block Association  
West 80s Neighborhood Association  
West Side Federation of Community and Block Assos.  
West End Preservation Society  
Word Of Life International, Inc.

*For more information*

***[www.EverySchool.nyc](http://www.EverySchool.nyc)***

Email: [marco.conner@transalt.org](mailto:marco.conner@transalt.org)



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ujafedny.org

**TESTIMONY: UJA-FEDERATION OF NEW YORK**

**New York City Council  
Committee on Transportation  
Honorable Ydanis A. Rodriguez, Chair**

**Oversight – Speed Cameras**

**Submitted by:  
Ariel Savransky  
UJA-Federation of New York**

**August 28, 2018**

Good afternoon Chairperson Rodriguez and members of the Committee on Transportation. My name is Ariel Savransky and I am an Advocacy and Policy Advisor at UJA Federation of New York. On behalf of UJA, our network of nonprofit partners and those we serve, thank you for the opportunity to testify on the importance of maintaining the life-saving protection of speed cameras in New York City neighborhoods in which schools are located.

Established more than 100 years ago, UJA-Federation of New York is one of the nation's largest local philanthropies. Central to our mission is to care for those in need. We identify and meet the needs of New Yorkers of all backgrounds and Jews everywhere. We connect people to their communities and respond to crises in New York, Israel and around the world. We support nearly 100 nonprofit organizations serving those that are most vulnerable and in need of programs and services.

UJA thanks the Administration and the City Council for its efforts and commitment to working with the state to ensure that speed safety cameras can continue to operate around New York City schools by the start of the 2018-19 school year. Between 2010 and 2014 more than 16,000 people were either killed or severely injured in traffic on NYC streets. According to the New York State Department of Motor Vehicles, speeding kills more New Yorkers than drunken driving and cell phone use while driving combined,<sup>1</sup> while motor vehicles remain the leading cause of injury-related death for our children.<sup>2</sup> In recognition of this trend, speed enforcement cameras were authorized for 20 school zones in New York City as a demonstration program in 2013. The success of the demonstration program prompted its expansion to 140 New York City school zones in 2014; however, the program is set to expire in 2018 unless new legislation is passed and enacted.

While we understand that speed cameras do not replace law enforcement officers, they do assist in the preservation of police resources and help avoid potentially dangerous traffic stops. Furthermore, research shows that the speed camera safety program is overwhelmingly effective. Speeding violations have dropped 63% and pedestrian crash-related injuries have decreased by more than 23% in locations with speed safety cameras.<sup>3</sup> Furthermore, 81% of vehicle owners ticketed in school zones do not incur a second violation.<sup>4</sup>

The school-based speed camera program is also administered fairly. Vehicle owners are ticketed just \$50 and only when the speed limit is exceeded by more than 10 mph. Drivers do not receive points on their license, and cameras only take a photo of the rear license plate - they do not monitor the race, age or gender of the driver.

Fatal speeding is rampant, and speed safety cameras are the most efficient, cost-effective and equitable speed enforcement tool we have. We look forward to continuing to work together to ensure that this program is not only continued but also expanded so that all one million New York City students can benefit from these life-saving cameras.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify. If you have any questions, please contact me at [savranskya@ujafedny.org](mailto:savranskya@ujafedny.org).

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<sup>1</sup> NYS Department of Motor Vehicles. *New York Crash Summary*, (accessed Jan. 10, 2017).

<sup>2</sup> *Understanding Child Injury Deaths*, NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Feb. 2014).

<sup>3</sup> New York City DOT. *Automated Speed Enforcement Program Report: 2014-2016*.

<http://www.nyc.gov/html/dot/downloads/pdf/speed-camera-report-june2017.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Id.



**Testimony of  
Christopher Widelo, Associate State Director  
AARP New York**

**New York City Council  
Committee on Transportation**

**Imposing liability on vehicle owners for  
failure to comply with maximum speed limits  
in school speed zones.**

**August 28, 2018**

**City Hall  
New York, New York**

**Contact: Chris Widelo (212) 407-3737 | [cwidelo@aarp.org](mailto:cwidelo@aarp.org)**

I am Christopher Widelo, Associate State Director for AARP New York. Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on the important issue of speed cameras in school zones.

AARP New York has been in strong support of a proposal on the state level to extend and expand the use of speed cameras in school safety zones (S.6046-C/A.7798-C). We commend Governor Cuomo, Mayor de Blasio and Speaker Johnson and the Council for coming together to reactivate speed cameras in New York City school zones, and we will continue to work to permanently extend and expand this vital program.

Speed safety cameras, which photograph the license plates of drivers going at least 11 miles per hour over the speed limit, have reduced speeding by about 60 percent at schools where they have been stationed. Better yet, they are changing driving behaviors — getting drivers to slow down for good. Data shows that more than 80 percent of drivers who get one or two \$50 tickets from the cameras don't get a third within two years.

These cameras have been a crucial part of the New York City Vision Zero program's street safety package, which has reduced pedestrian deaths by 45 percent since 2014. Still, last year, 51 people over the age of 65 were killed while walking in the city, with speed being a major contributor to crashes. Others suffered needless pain and disability after being hit by drivers disobeying the speed limit. Clearly, there is more work to be done.

AARP New York is aware of a proposal to expand the speed camera program to areas near Naturally Occurring Retirement Communities (NORCs) and senior centers. AARP would be in strong support of this proposal, as older adults are more likely to fall victim to traffic fatalities.

Older adults account for half of all pedestrian fatalities even though they make up just 14 percent of New York City's population. According to a 2017 report from the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, older adults (aged 65 years and older) had the highest pedestrian fatality rate (5.7 per 100,000 population).

AARP supports the use of speed enforcement technology and policies to eliminate roadway death, and speed cameras are a proven tool to achieve that goal. I thank the Committee for their work on this issue and for the opportunity to submit testimony today.

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 8-28-18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: OLEK Chomynovskiy

Address: Police Plaza

I represent: NYPD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Juan Martinez

Address: Dir. of Traffic Operations Policy

I represent: NYC DOT

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Polly Trottenberg

Address: Commissioner NYC DOT

I represent: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Ariel Savransky

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: UJA-Federation

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition **YES**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: VINCENT RIGGINS

Address: 1530 Penn. Ave Bkly NY 11239

I represent: BRITE LEADERSHIP COALITION INC

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 8-28-18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Chief Thomas Chan

Address: 9 Police Plaza, NY, NY 10036

I represent: NYPD

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. speed Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 8/28/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARCO CONNER

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

I represent: TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 2725 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 8/28/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Lizi Rahman

Address: 85-66 150 street

I represent: Families for Safe Streets

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 2728 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor  in opposition

Date: 8/28/18

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Jane Martin-Lavaud

Address: 2375 E ~~14th~~ 3rd St. BKlyn

I represent: Families for Safe Streets

Address: 111 John St. NY NY

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 2728 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 8/28/2018

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Debbie Kahn / Families for safe streets

Address: 111 John Street, NY, NY

I represent: Families for safe streets

Address: 111 John Street, NY, NY

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. 2728 Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Speed Safety Cameras Date: 8/28/2018

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Rita Barravecchio

Address: 36 Colonial Road Floral Park, NY

I represent: Families for safe streets

Address: 111 John Street

THE COUNCIL  
THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. \_\_\_\_\_ Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 in favor  in opposition

Date: 8/28/2018

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: Sofia Russo

Address: 111 John St NY NY

I represent: ~~Transportation~~

Address: Families for safe streets

Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms

# THE COUNCIL THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Appearance Card

I intend to appear and speak on Int. No. Speech cards Res. No. \_\_\_\_\_

in favor     in opposition

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

(PLEASE PRINT)

Name: MARY BETH KELLY

Address: 310 RIVERSIDE DR # 1707

I represent: FAMILIES FOR SAFE STREETS

Address: FA

▶ Please complete this card and return to the Sergeant-at-Arms ◀