

# INTERIM JOINT COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION

## Minutes of the 3rd Meeting of the 2024 Interim

August 20, 2024

### Call to Order and Roll Call

The third meeting of the Interim Joint Committee on Transportation was held on August 20, 2024, at 1:00 PM in Room 149 of the Capitol Annex. Representative John Blanton, Chair, called the meeting to order, and the secretary called the roll.

### Present were:

Members: Representative John Blanton Co-Chair; Senators Karen Berg, Robby Mills, Brandon J. Storm, Johnnie Turner, Phillip Wheeler, Gex Williams, and David Yates; Representatives Randy Bridges, Adrielle Camuel, Daniel Elliott, Ken Fleming, David Hale, Samara Heavrin, John Hodgson, Thomas Huff, Mary Beth Imes, Bobby McCool, Amy Neighbors, Ruth Ann Palumbo, Tom Smith, Ashley Tackett Laferty, Walker Thomas, Ken Upchurch, and Bill Wesley.

Guests: Chad LaRue, Executive Director, Kentucky Association of Highway Contractors (KAHC); Bill Bell, Director, Office of Highway Safety, Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC); Kjell Lyngstad, President/CEO, VITRONIC Machine Vision Ltd.; Niclas Andersson, Vice President of Sales, VITRONIC Machine Vision Ltd.; Bob Dallas, Senior Advisor, Blue Line Solutions; Dan Seum, Jr., Louisville Metro Councilman; Jennifer Caummisar-Kern, Director, Louisville Metro Public Works; Claire Yates, Transportation Planner, Louisville Metro Public Works; Representative Steven Rudy; Mike Hancock, Deputy Secretary, KYTC; Robin Brewer, Executive Director, Office of Budget and Fiscal Management, KYTC

LRC Staff: John Snyder, Dana Fugazzi, Ashley Nash, and Christina Williams.

### Approval of July 16, 2024 Minutes

The minutes for the July 16, 2024 meeting were approved.

### Highway Safety/Automated Enforcement

Chad LaRue, Executive Director, KAHC, spoke about the association's top priority of ensuring the safety and well-being of their members, employees, and the traveling public. Due in large part to speeding and distracted driving, more people are being injured or killed in Kentucky's work zones. The KAHC advocated for every effort to be made to minimize dangers in work zones, and Mr. LaRue expressed appreciation of Chairman Blanton's continuous efforts to make statutory progress. He further added that implementation of automated speed enforcement in other states has shown lives saved

and because of that, KAHC will continue to support that effort.

Bill Bell, Director, Office of Highway Safety, KYTC, briefed the committee on enhancing work zone safety, with the overall goal of preventing work zone crashes, injuries, and deaths on Kentucky roadways. Figures were provided of work zone incidents between January 1, 2024 through July 31, 2024, which included 765 crashes, 98 injuries, and two fatalities. Mr. Bell stated the use of automated enforcement would save lives, reduce speeds in work zones, improve driver behavior, complement existing Kentucky State Police enforcement, and promote work zone safety.

In response to a question asked by Senator Karen Berg, Mr. Bell stated after the initial startup costs of utilizing automated enforcement, there is a fee for service cost paid to the vendor to have cameras operational and to send out correspondence to those that violate the speed limit. Chairman John Blanton stated in the legislation he sponsored; any funds generated from the issuance of citations would go back into funding the program, and any excess money generated above the cost of the program would go into the Transportation Safety Fund for further safety programs. In response to a follow-up question, Mr. Bell stated the Kentucky General Assembly can decide how the implementation of automated enforcement is structured.

Representative Daniel Elliott advocated for the use of signage to indicate when there is a worker present in work zones.

Kjell Lyngstad, President/CEO, VITRONIC Machine Vision Ltd. and Niclas Andersson, Vice President of Sales, VITRONIC Machine Vision Ltd. briefed the committee on VITRONIC and their automated enforcement technology. Mr. Andersson touched briefly on traffic safety statistics and the correlation between speeding and road safety, stating that advanced machine vision enables smarter and safer traffic.

Mr. Andersson stated VITRONIC utilizes scanning LiDAR which sends out a cone of 158 different laser beams simultaneously across up to six lanes. If there is a distance between the cars of less than one foot, they can accurately identify which vehicle was speeding and a reference frame is painted around that license plate. Over one billion tickets have been issued around the world using this technology. VITRONIC supplies administration and operational services for traffic enforcement that includes the manufacturing and supply of automated traffic enforcement systems; installation, maintenance and operation of the full enforcement program; and violation issuance, mailing, and payment services.

In response to a question asked by Representative Randy Bridges, Mr. Andersson stated they have not spoken with Kentucky State Police about the use of VITRONIC's automated enforcement system. In response to a follow-up question, Mr. Andersson stated the use of

this technology acts as a force multiplier allowing officers to focus their skills elsewhere. In response to a question also asked by Representative Bridges, the activation of the device is monitored by the vendor in accordance with the state law.

In response to a question asked by Senator Berg, Mr. Andersson stated the state law's speed limit will be programmed into the device and can even be changed on a daily basis. He added most states will place an eight to 11 miles per hour grace of whatever the speed limit is set at. In response to a follow-up question, Mr. Andersson stated to replace law enforcement as a visual reminder of what the speed limit is, flashing signage is often used when it is being photo enforced.

In response to a question asked by Representative Walker Thomas, Mr. Andersson stated radar technology is essentially a listening device which sends out radio waves and listens for when it comes back and tries to determine where everything happens. With scanning LiDAR it's like standing on the side of the road and looking and observing where the speeding is occurring.

In response to a question asked by Representative Samara Heavrin concerning the protection of the driver's identity with the use of automated enforcement cameras, Mr. Andersson stated most states and most programs require images of the rear of the vehicle, which is VIVTRONIC's preference, because it makes it a civil violation instead of a moving violation where a police officer has to be present. The driver stays unknown as the violation is recorded.

In response to a question asked by Representative Robby Mills, Mr. Andersson stated where the equipment is placed within the work zone is usually stipulated by law and are normally mobile deployments unless the work zone will be more permanent. In response to a follow-up question, Chairman Blanton stated the legislation he sponsored states only during working hours when workers are present will the work zones speeds be enforced.

In response to a question asked by Representative Tom Smith, Mr. Andersson stated there are no points taken off of a driver's license due to a violation detected through their automated enforcement system, because it is a civil violation. The violation would not be reported to the Department of Motor Vehicles nor to insurance companies.

In response to a question asked by Senator David Yates, Mr. Andersson stated it would be possible to leave the systems in place even when they are not activated to serve as a reminder to reduce speed. Mr. Andersson added that the system can enforce one speed limit during work hours and be set to enforce another during a different time, depending on what is written in the law.

Bob Dallas, Senior Advisor, Blue Line Solutions briefed the committee on the automated speed enforcement company, as well as driving safety statistics. Mr. Dallas stated Blue Line Solutions utilizes data, community engagement, equity, signage, and LiDAR automated enforcement to reduce traffic accidents and promote driver safety.

In response to a question asked by Representative John Hodgson, Mr. Dallas stated it is not his intention to promote use of automated enforcement on every roadway, that they must be strategically placed. Work zones are a key area where the use of automated enforcement would be beneficial.

In response to a question asked by Senator Gex Williams, Chairman Blanton stated the current focus in legislation is the reduction of speed in work zones.

Dan Seum, Jr., Louisville Metro Councilman and Jennifer Caummisar-Kern, Director, Louisville Metro Public Works, and Claire Yates, Transportation Planner, Louisville Metro Public Works advocated for the use of automated enforcement. Mr. Seum cited many examples of use of excessive speed in areas, particularly in an area he represents, that police enforcement is oftentimes not available to patrol due to their other job duties or because of a large shortage of officers. Ms. Kerns spoke briefly on Vision Zero which policy is to eliminate deaths and serious injuries due to traffic collisions.

In response to a question asked by Representative Hodgson, Mr. Seum stated he is in favor of use of automated enforcement not just in work zones, but on residential roads as well if it would be beneficial to police officers and help alleviate some strain on their force.+

### **KAVIS Update Supplied**

Chairman Blanton informed members that KYTC supplied an update on KAVIS implementation, which is on the committee's website. The Cabinet had solved the issue of backlog of rebuilt titles and are now processing those within the statutorily mandated timeframe.

### **Age Eligibility for Instruction Permits**

Representative Steven Rudy briefed the committee on his proposed legislation that lowers the age of eligibility for a motor vehicle instruction permit from 16 to 15 years old. It increases the length of the validity of an instruction permit from three years to four years. A person is still required to wait until they are 16 years old and have held the instruction permit for a minimum of 180 days before they may apply for an intermediate license. The intermediate license requirements have not been changed.

In response to a question asked by Senator Williams, Representative Rudy agreed that driving experience is key.

In response to a question asked by Senator Phillip Wheeler, Representative Rudy stated the bill does in essence allow for six additional months of drive training with the minor's parents if they so choose to take that route.

In response to a question asked by Representative Adrielle Camuel, Representative Rudy stated he has spoken with some insurance companies who are in support of the legislation; however, he is sure there are still some concerns with other insurance agencies. He stated he has not had a conversation with the Fraternal Order of Police concerning the legislation, as the conversation is in early stages.

In response to a question asked by Representative Elliott regarding how this law has changed since it was first passed, Representative Rudy stated that the intermediate license step was established in 2010 and that step still exists in his proposal.

### **Road Fund Annual Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 Closeout Report**

Robin Brewer, Executive Director, Office of Budget and Fiscal Management, KYTC, briefed the committee on the FY 2024 Road Fund closeout report. The enacted revenue estimate totaled \$1,682.2 million. The actual revenue collected totaled \$1,874.6 million, leaving a shortfall of \$7.1 million from the revised official revenue estimate. However, due to various savings, the Road Fund surplus for 2024 totaled \$9.8 million. Actual revenues collected in FY 2024 totaled \$1,874.6 million and \$1,753.3 million in 2023, an increase of \$131.3 million, or 6.9 percent. The enacted Road Fund revenue estimate for FY 2025 is \$1,825 million.

### **Special Recognition**

Chairman Blanton recognized John Snyder, Committee Staff Administrator, Transportation Committee, for his appointment as Staff Chair for the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL). Mr. Snyder received this honor at the 2024 NCSL Summit held in Louisville.

Mike Hancock, Deputy Secretary, KYTC, recognized Robin Brewer, Executive Director, Office of Budget and Fiscal Management, KYTC for her outstanding service and dedication to the cabinet, and congratulated her on her upcoming retirement.

### **Adjournment**

With no further business to come before the committee, Chairman Blanton adjourned the meeting at 2:58 P.M.