

Witness Testimony: Jeff McKay, Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors
House Committee on Natural Resources Legislative Hearing on Four Bills: H.R. 6778, H.R.
7618, H.R. 7951 and H.R. 7979
H.R. 6778 (Rep. Beyer), “*Parkway Safety and Reinvestment Act*”
Thursday, March 26, 2026

Thank you for having me here today. My name is Jeff McKay, and I am Chairman of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors.

In my role, I have seen firsthand the impacts of speeding on the GW Parkway. Speeding has caused a number of casualties, and, tragically, more than 20 fatalities since 2007, the most recent of which was this past New Year’s Eve. With nearly 7 million drivers taking the GW Parkway annually, making it the 8th most visited Park site in America, our ability and responsibility to protect driver safety is great.

The 2021 National Park Service Traffic and Safety Context Sensitive Solutions Assessment of the GW Parkway showed significant speeding.ⁱ For example, in the Northbound lanes South of Belle View Boulevard, 99% of vehicles exceeded the speed limit. And these speeding cars are rarely just a few miles per hour over the limit; the average velocity of speeding cars was 10 to 15 miles per hour above the posted limit on the Parkway, with a quarter of speeding cars going 20 miles per hour or more above the posted limit. Excessive speeds can increase both the frequency and severity of crashes.ⁱⁱ

Since the 2021 study of the Parkway, Fairfax County has had the opportunity to study photo speed enforcement on other roads in the county. Our speed camera pilot began in 2023 with 10 photo speed enforcement cameras in school zones across the County; today, we have 20 in school zones and one in a work zone. The goal of these programs is to change the behavior of drivers and make our roads safer for drivers, pedestrians, and bicyclists. Vehicle speeds dropped an average of over 10 percent in the first locations where we placed these devices. In a 25 mile per hour (mph) zone, that means that the average driver is now going approximately 27 mph rather than over 30 mph.ⁱⁱⁱ If a photo speed enforcement program were implemented on the Parkway, it is our hope that the outcomes would be like what we have experienced in other areas of Fairfax County. Getting drivers to slow down saves lives, prevents crashes, and protects all users of our roadways. As we have seen, photo enforcement is a critical tool in doing that.

That is why I support the legislative solution described in Congressman Beyer’s Parkway Safety and Reinvestment Act. This bill does not authorize any new speed mitigation technology—speed cameras are already authorized for use on Park lands as the Administrator sees fit.

To be clear, this bill is not a punishment, nor is it intended to place a tax on those who use the GW Parkway every day, as many government workers from administration officials to congressional staffers do. Local drivers who take the Parkway every day will know where the speed cameras are and be prepared to slow down in advance. Public awareness and signage will help prepare drivers and promote safety for all the people who use the Parkway. As the Parkway Safety and Reinvestment Act can improve driver safety and lower speeds on the Parkway and

other facilities, helping to reduce the number and severity of collisions and allowing people to enjoy the beauty of our national parks.

This committee has provided support for the GW Parkway in the past, through the Great American Outdoors Act. This bill supports a common goal of ours, focusing not on the road itself but on the safety of the people who use it. It is a smart, responsible policy that keeps Americans safe and strengthens the national parks and major transportation corridors they use every day.

Thank you for your consideration, and I hope to see this important bill passed through this Committee soon.

ⁱ Villwock-Witte N, Clouser K, Silberman P, Romo A, Lavery B, and Keller C. 2021. *George Washington Memorial Parkway Traffic and Safety Context Sensitive Solutions Assessment*. National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, April 2021. <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/showFile.cfm?sfid=468517&projectID=89079>.

ⁱⁱ Aarts L and van Schagen I. 2006. Driving speed and the risk of road crashes: A review. *Accident Analysis & Prevention* 38(2): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.aap.2005.07.004>.

ⁱⁱⁱ Fairfax County, Speed Camera Program website: <https://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/topics/speed-cameras>