



Dear Sir or Madam:

Enclosed you will find a complete package on our efforts to **STOP Red Light Running**. Please review and contact us if you require any additional information or if you would like to lend your support to this very important public safety effort.

In this package you will find a pledge sponsored by the **STOP Red Light Running** Coalition, a new group of interested organizations, units of government and citizens. We are dedicated to curbing one of Florida's most dangerous killers and traffic violators.

Increased traffic safety is the primary goal of the **STOP Red Light Running** Coalition. For that reason, I'd like to ask you to sign the **STOP Red Light Running Safety Pledge**.

This Safety Pledge is an important expression recognizing the need for change and improved enforcement measures. Very simply, signers of the pledge publicly demonstrate a commitment to support efforts to ban red light running, to impose stiff penalties for repeat offenders and to reduce the tragedies by the use of photo enforcement systems (license plate photos).

The **STOP Red Light Running** Coalition – which includes over 80 organizations and units of government including numerous municipal governments, law enforcement agencies from around the state, private businesses, public safety groups, and others who have been encouraging Governor Charlie Crist, members of the Florida Legislature and others such as yourself to “**STOP Red Light Running!**” and to prevent the senseless loss of lives on Florida's roadways.

Please do the right thing! Sign the **STOP Red Light Running Safety Pledge** today and return it to us at the address listed below. That's not all though...read on for other ways you can assist in our legislative efforts intended to save lives.

STOP Red Light Running!
P.O. Box 321
Bradenton, Florida 34206
Fax: (941) 745-1877
Email: NeilS@ManateeChamber.com
www.floridastopsonred.org



STOP Red Light Running! Safety Pledge

Recognizing that Florida's transportation corridors and intersections are the life-line of our economy and vital to the safety and protection of motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and others.

I, _____, pledge to the intersection users of the State of Florida, that I support efforts to *uniformly ban* red light running, to impose stiff penalties for repeat offenders and to reduce the tragedies/deaths due to intersection crashes by the use of automated enforcement systems. I support and encourage the use of red light running enforcement cameras as a deterrent of this reckless behavior and to penalize those with a blatant disregard for life and law.

Signature

Date

Printed Name

Email

Street Address

City, State Zip

Fax #

Pledges should be signed, dated and returned to:

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What can I do?

If you're a motorist in Florida, chances are your life (or someone you know) has been affected by a red light runner. Statistically, 3 of every 10 people will be involved in an alcohol related crash. Believe it or not, the odds for becoming a victim of red light running are equally high, yet we have not had nationwide vocal advocacy groups like MADD to prompt change....until now!

Here's a few things you can do to help change this:

Contact your local legislators! Call, visit, email, or write your local legislators seeking their support with this legislative effort. There are sample letters at the end of this package, which provide a guideline in preparing your own letter to your representative. Ask your representatives to sign a safety pledge much like the one you have signed. We have provided copies of the pledge for legislators and one for representatives of your local municipal government if you would like to take one with you when you visit or provide to them with your mailing. We would love to hear of any response you receive. Please forward a copy to us at the address below or drop us a line via email or the "Contact Us" box on our website. This provides us an opportunity to follow-up with them, confirming their support of The Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act for this year's legislative session. We elect our legislators as representatives of our voices. Let your voice be heard!!

Help to spread awareness and education. Many drivers are unaware of the tragic human consequences of running a red light. Contact us to come to your next homeowners association meeting, church or civic group or school. It makes a difference when a victim or a family member shares their personal story. Literature and other handouts are available.

Sign up. Send us a note with your contact information so that we can keep you up-to-date of the latest Coalition efforts and volunteer opportunities.

Are you or a family member a victim of a red light runner? Share your story with us. There are many (too many) families that have been affected by this issue.

Stay informed. The Mark Wandall Traffic Safety Act allows use of photo enforcement to penalize red light runners, did not pass in the 2006 legislative session. This was a huge disappointment, however, it did nothing more than spark our energies and dedication for making this happen in 2007! 2006 was a stepping stone. We realize there's much to be done and your assistance is welcomed and appreciated!

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STOP RED LIGHT RUNNING! COALITION FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Q: Is red light running a serious problem?

A: Each year more than 900 people are killed and nearly 200,000 are injured in crashes that involve red light running. Half of the deaths are pedestrians and occupants in other vehicles who are hit by red light runners.

Q: Isn't conventional police enforcement sufficient?

A: Enforcing traffic laws by traditional means poses special difficulties for police, who in most cases must follow a violator through a red light to stop it. This endangers motorists and pedestrians as well as officers. Police can't be everywhere at once. Photo enforcement would free up police to focus on other important community needs.

Q: Are red-light cameras surveillance cameras that are always on?

A: No, Red light cameras are NOT surveillance cameras. The cameras don't record images except when the signal is red. Even when the signal is red, the camera will only capture photos of vehicles that meet specific thresholds. In most cases, those thresholds are very generous (see the next question). The municipalities installing these cameras are not out to capture images of everyone, just to write tickets. Their objective is to penalize those people who blatantly disregard traffic signals, putting all of our lives at risk.

Q: What triggers a red light camera to take a picture?

A: Systems from different suppliers use different types of technology but generally the following must happen: 1) A sensor detects when the traffic signal is in the red phase, which in turn, tells the camera system when the light is red. 2) Another sensor determines that a vehicle is approaching the intersection at a speed that exceeds a setting for that intersection, usually around 15-20mph, indicating the vehicle won't stop. Speed can be sensed by radar, loops in the road, video camera, or laser. What does this mean? These cameras are intended to capture images of those individuals who are blatantly disregarding the signal, blowing through the intersection at a higher rate of speed which is most likely to result in a fatal crash. 3) The vehicle must cross 2 trigger points for the sensor - one before the intersection stop bar and one in the intersection, both with the light still red.

Q: Does someone review the photographs before motorists are ticketed?

A: Yes. Trained police officers or other city officials with the appropriate training and/or certifications will review *every* picture to verify vehicle information and ensure that the vehicle is truly in violation. This also leaves the same degree of subjective judgement that an officer would use had he/she observed the violation in person. For example, they are able to determine if weather conditions or some type of obstacle may have caused the violation. Tickets are mailed to owners only in cases where it's clear the vehicle ran the red light.

Q: By constantly taking pictures, don't red light cameras invade motorists' privacy and show the driver and passengers without them knowing about it?

A: No, Red light cameras do not invade motorists' privacy. Driving is a regulated activity on public roads. By obtaining a license, a motorist agrees to abide by certain rules, one of which is to obey traffic signals. Remember, red light cameras ONLY capture images during a violation. If you aren't running red lights, your picture won't be taken!! Additionally, Florida would only allow photographs of the rear of the vehicle; no pictures are taken of the driver or passenger compartment, and no pictures are permitted of the front of the vehicle. The photos don't reveal much beyond the color and make of a vehicle and, of course, its license plate number.



Q: Aren't red light cameras just "cash cows" for local government?

A: No, Red light cameras are about safety first! In fact, many jurisdictions are losing money or just breaking even to provide the program. This safety program is designed to save lives. It's paid for by the motorists who drive recklessly, making cameras necessary to begin with. Police enforcement, however, is paid for by all of us with tax dollars. What's wrong with a safety program paid for by those who make it necessary? A ticket for less than \$100 would be sent to the vehicle's registered owner. The jurisdiction issuing the ticket would receive only a minimal portion of the fine, and the rest of that money would go to support other public safety interests such as local trauma centers.

Q: Would I have a chance to appeal my case?

A: Yes, a citizen has the right to appeal a citation, regardless of where it originated. The information is normally provided on the back of the citation. Red light camera laws indicate what court has jurisdiction over the citations for appeals. Citizens can always take their case to higher level courts under the American system of justice. At the hearing the adjudicator or judge is presented with the same evidence that was provided to all citation reviewers and any innocence explanation that the citizen has provided. The adjudicator or judge may choose to uphold the citation or dismiss the case.

Q: What if my teenager or employee were driving my vehicle and ran the red light and, as the registered owner, I receive the citation?

A: If your teenager or employee were driving in a behavior that endangered their lives or the lives of others, wouldn't you want to know? An ounce of prevention goes a long way! If someone else were driving your vehicle and found at fault in a serious crash, you could be held civilly liable for damages. What does that mean? The victims of that crash can turn around and sue YOU for their loss. In the event of serious injury or fatality, the financial loss to you could be devastating. The citation issued from a photo enforcement camera does not result in points on your license. It's better to know that your vehicle is being driven in an unsafe manner and pay \$100 fine so that you can take corrective measures before a tragedy occurs.

Q: I've heard that red light cameras increase the number of rear-end collisions. Is this true and if so, why use them?

A: There is a potential for an increase in rear-end collisions with the installation of red light cameras. The same can be said for the installation of a new traffic signal. Traffic signals are intended to reduce the number of right-angle crashes, which are the most severe type of crash and the most likely to result in serious injury or death. The number of rear-end collisions decrease as drivers become accustomed to the new signal. A temporary peak in rear-end collisions is not uncommon and will subside as driver behavior is modified.

Q: Why don't they just change the length of the yellow light?

A: The timing of the yellow phase is calculated based on the prevailing travel speed. It allows time for a driver to safely clear the intersection if they have already entered it, or provides the distance required for a motorist to safely and comfortably decelerate to a stop. Shortening the yellow signal significantly increase the risk of right angle collisions by not allowing time for those who are already in the intersection to clear before cross traffic begins. Lengthening the cycle can be helpful in some circumstances, but only to a minimum degree. The longer the cycle, the more drivers are likely to take advantage of the opportunity to "sneak through" the light. Furthermore, lengthening of yellow cycles contributes to the overall delay and congestion on already heavily populated roadways.

Sample 1: Use this as a sample when writing a letter in your own words to your legislator! If you have trouble locating contact information for your legislators, contact us. We'll be glad to assist.

Your street address
City, State Zip

Date

Representative or Senator _____
Addresses can be found at www.myfloridahouse.gov
Or www.flsenate.gov

Dear Honorable (Representative or Senator) _____:

RE: SAVING LIVES ON OUR ROADS

Every year our friends and loved ones are dying on Florida's roadways as a result of red light running. This is a senseless loss of life at the hands of careless and reckless drivers with a blatant disregard for life and the law. These crashes not only kill the people we care most about, they drain our economy of monies that could be better spent.

It is important to me that I have some sense of security when driving or riding on our roadways. I want to feel safe in knowing that my loved ones and friends will make it home safely tonight.

I realize that red light running is only one of many traffic safety issues, but one that is so easily remedied with the use of red light running cameras. We cannot have a law enforcement officer on every corner, but we can discourage illegal behavior by using cameras to penalize drivers who blatantly disobey traffic signals. We already have cameras in use to penalize people who disregard a toll. Why not use them to penalize people who disregard human life?

As a constituent of your district, I am seeking your support on behalf of everyone that is dear to me. Please sign the STOP! Red Light Running Safety Pledge, supporting the use of red light photo enforcement technology. You can find this pledge and additional information at www.floridastopsonred.org. Please lend your support when this issue comes before Florida's legislators next year. Please make a difference and save lives!

Sincerely,

Your signature and name

Sample 2: Use this as a sample when writing a letter in your own words to your legislator! If you have trouble locating contact information for your legislators, contact us. We'll be glad to assist.

Your street address
City, State Zip

Date

Representative or Senator _____
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Or www.flsenate.gov

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RE: SAVING LIVES ON OUR ROADS

Every year our friends and loved ones are dying on Florida's roadways as a result of red light running. This is a senseless loss of life at the hands of careless and reckless drivers with a blatant disregard for life and the law. These crashes not only kill the people we care most about, they drain our economy of monies that could be better spent.

I do not understand the argument that red light enforcement cameras are an invasion of privacy. Driving is a privilege, not a right! A person should not have an expectation of privacy when driving on a public roadway. We are already under constant surveillance of traffic cameras installed by FDOT and news cameras, aside from the many surveillance cameras we encounter on a daily basis at banks, stores, bus terminals, airports, etc.

The State of Florida has provided legislation to allow the use of cameras to ticket toll violators. These cameras protect violations of a revenue source. Toll violators are doing nothing more than robbing the public of change each time they run a toll. Red light runners, on the other hand, destroy lives and cost our society millions of dollars. Red light enforcement cameras discourage a reckless behavior. They save lives. Does our great State value a \$1 toll over human life? I would hope not.

As a constituent of your district, I am seeking your support on behalf of everyone that is dear to me. Please sign the STOP! Red Light Running Safety Pledge, supporting the use of red light photo enforcement technology. You can find this pledge and additional information at www.floridastopsonred.org. Please lend your support when this issue comes before Florida's legislators next year. Please make a difference and save lives!

Sincerely,

Your signature and name



STOP Red Light Running! Legislative Safety Pledge

Recognizing that Florida's transportation corridors and intersections are the life-line of our economy and vital to the safety and protection of motorists, bicyclists, pedestrians and others.

I, _____, pledge to the intersection users of the _____ district of the State of Florida, and to the people of this state, that I support efforts to *uniformly ban* red light running, to impose stiff penalties for repeat offenders and to reduce the tragedies/deaths due to intersection crashes by the use of automated enforcement systems.

Signature

Date

Title

Pledges should be signed, dated and returned to:

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STOP RED LIGHT RUNNING! COALITION MUNICIPAL PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS, red light running, a dangerous and costly problem in Florida and nationwide, results in over one million automobile crashes each year, producing more than 500,000 injuries and more than 1,000 fatalities; and

WHEREAS, red light running costs the public an estimated \$7 billion per year in lost wages, medical bills and damages; and

WHEREAS, every day, thousands of motorists run red lights in Florida, recklessly endangering their lives and the lives of other motorists and pedestrians; and

WHEREAS, each year, according to the Florida State Highway Patrol, over 300,000 motorists are ticketed for running red lights in Florida every year, and more than 9,000 of those motorists crash; and

WHEREAS, crashes caused by drivers who run red lights can have the same result as crashes caused by drunk drivers – serious injury or death – leaving victims with severe long-term physical and emotional scars; and

WHEREAS, red light running is often a result of aggressive driving and the time saved by avoiding a red light – an average of 47 seconds – is not worth the potential cost in human lives; and

WHEREAS, the use of automated photo enforcement systems as a means of deterring violations of red light traffic signals has proven to reduce intersection collisions by more than forty percent (40%), and their use is supported by the Florida Insurance Council, Florida League of Cities, Federal Highway Administration, Insurance Institute for Highway Safety and other local, state and national agencies, and whereby the State of Florida is urged to allow the implementation of these systems to increase traffic safety across our state.

WHEREAS, we realize safety is a shared responsibility, which drivers must also shoulder by making smart decisions on the road;

NOW, THEREFORE, _____, **Florida**
CITY/COUNTY

hereby fully supports the **STOP Red Light Running!** Coalition and urge all Florida citizens and legislators to renew their commitment to traffic safety and do all they can to stop red light running.

Signed by _____ on this _____ day of _____, 2006

For more information visit: www.orgsites.com/fl/floridastops/