



ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COMMISSION 1E
GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

2605 SHERMAN AVE, NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20001
ANC1E.ORG
1E@ANC.DC.GOV

BRADLEY GALLAGHER
1E01@ANC.DC.GOV

BOBBIE LANCASTER
1E02@ANC.DC.GOV

MICHAEL WRAY, TREASURER
1E03@ANC.DC.GOV

RASHIDA BROWN, VICE CHAIR
1E04@ANC.DC.GOV

PHILIP NEWLAND
1E05@ANC.DC.GOV

JOSH JACOBSON, SECRETARY
1E06@ANC.DC.GOV

BRIAN FOOTER, CHAIR
1E07@ANC.DC

**#1E-2023-0702: LETTER CALLING FOR DPW TO BOOT AND
TOW VEHICLES WITH OVER \$1,000 IN SPEEDING FINES**

Mr. Timothy W. Spriggs, Director
Department of Public Works (DPW)
Frank D. Reeves Municipal Center
2000 14th Street, NW
Washington, DC 20009

Dear Director Spriggs,

The first step in achieving DC's Vision Zero traffic safety goals is to identify the most dangerous drivers operating vehicles in DC, whether they are from DC, MD or VA. The second step is to show that such reckless behavior is unacceptable by taking rapid, effective enforcement actions. We propose a specific and ambitious target that will signal to reckless drivers that DC is serious about reducing reckless driving: by September 30, 2024, 20% of all vehicles with over \$1,000 in fines from moving violations are booted and/or towed. We further propose that this goal increases by an incremental 10 percentage points every year until 80% of eligible vehicles are booted or towed.

This is physically and technologically possible. Fines to address traffic safety and speed must come at a balance and not impose an undue financial burden on DC residents, particularly those who are low-income. ANC1E urges DC Government to consider policies for addressing the socioeconomic impacts of residents who fall in arrears and strategies for addressing speed other than fines.¹

According to press accounts, there are more than [633,000 boot eligible vehicles](#) on DC streets, owned by drivers in DC, MD, and VA. There is more than \$1.3 billion in unpaid fines, according to DC DPW. This is particularly vexing when street and sidewalk safety improvements are underfunded and not advancing at a sufficiently aggressive pace. We believe a substantial portion of the revenue from these fines should be specifically targeted to support Vision Zero's goals, rather than be allocated to the General Fund.

To find and penalize traffic law breakers, many approaches are available. An approach ANC 1E recommends would call for DPW, DDOT, and DMV to analyze its moving citation data and generate a prioritized list of vehicles and their corresponding license plates. DPW should then take this list of license plates and immediately scale up its use of readily available mobile license readers to then prioritize and implement active booting and towing of vehicles with large numbers of severe moving citations. To ensure such a government program is implemented, transparent metrics must be created to measure success or failure.

¹ Zickuhr, K. (April 2019). Applying a racial equity lens to fines and fees in the District of Columbia. DC Fiscal Policy.

The citations should be addressed to the vehicle's registered owner, who is assumed to be the party responsible for the vehicle's use. Our government must develop a system that prioritizes fines, considers their number and the dangerous conduct that led to the fine, as well as ability to pay. But there must be recognition of the occurrence and a penalty. This could include a fine ranking system based on the number of citations and the degree to which victims are endangered by dangerous behavior. Substitution of driving classes could be considered in lieu of high fines.

Overall and most importantly, the District must show it cares about traffic deaths and injuries and is willing to create a climate of traffic safety. Systematic and aggressive enforcement against these vehicles would signal to motorists that endangering people with excessive speeding has real consequences.

ANC 1E designates Commissioner Josh Jacobson to represent the Commission in all matters relating to this Resolution. In the event the designated representative Commissioner cannot carry out their representative duties for any reason, ANC 1E authorizes the Chair to designate another Commissioner to represent the Commission in all matter relating to this Resolution.

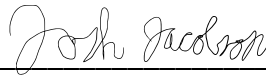
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Certification:

At a regularly scheduled and publicly noticed meeting held on July 26, 2023, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 1E considered the above resolution. With a quorum of 6 Commissioners present, the Commission voted with 6 Yeas, 0 Nays, and 0 Abstentions, to adopt the above resolution.



Brian Footer
Chairperson, ANC 1E



Josh Jacobson
Secretary, ANC 1E