



## Speeding Tickets-A Multibillion Dollar Industry

*An analysis of the data in the Governors Highway Safety Report showing that US state and local governments take in over eight billion dollars each year from speeding tickets.*

([PRWEB](#)) June 20, 2005 -- The number of traffic accidents has decreased as has the number and seriousness of personal injuries. During this period the number of autos on the road and the number of miles driven have both increased. The absolute proof is that the auto insurance industry is actually decreasing the cost of auto insurance in many instances.

In light of these facts what is the response from our state governments? It is to be found in the call from the Governor's Highway Safety Association for a tougher stance on speeding. It seems that they have found out that most police officers give drivers a 10mph "cushion" before issuing a speeding ticket. This lack of strict enforcement has outraged the powers that be. The real question is why they are so upset? Supposedly they are concerned for our safety. If that is the case then why is the fact our roads are safer than ever being relegated to the back pages while the call for tougher enforcement is a major news story.

Could it be that what most of us have suspected is really true? Are speeding tickets more about revenue than safety? I agree that excessive speeding and aggressive driving are a danger and those drivers need to be dealt with severely. But are you really safer if you drive 55 while the rest of the vehicles are moving at 65. The answer is a resounding no. The fact is that the majority of drivers will maintain a speed which they feel comfortable and safe. This is why many states use traffic surveys to set speed limits. Studies have shown that the speed of 85% of the vehicles is the best determination of the safe speed for that particular roadway.

Since there is no real evidence that the "cushion" is a safety factor then why the call for tougher enforcement? Could it be that the Governors are not satisfied with the take from the current multibillion dollar speeding ticket industry? I will give you some facts and then you can decide for yourself.

An analysis of the data in the Governors Highway Safety Report shows that the Highway Patrol in the forty states that keep statistics on the number of traffic citations issued more than 8.1 million tickets. Multiply this by the base speeding ticket fine rate in each state and the total comes to more than 2.3 billion in revenue. Keep in mind that this is only from the Highway Patrol and does not include the citations written by local officers. It is not unusual for a small town to take in a significant amount of its budget from speeding ticket fines. In fact it has become such a problem that some states have passed laws regulating the percentage of the budget a town can take in from traffic fines. Oklahoma passed such a law just last year after numerous complaints.

Florida is one of the few states that keeps records on the number of speeding tickets issued by local officers. In 2003 the Florida State Patrol issued 396,252 tickets and local police issued 394,752 citations for a total combined revenue of more than \$200 million dollars. Take the ten states that do not report and add in the speeding tickets issued by local police and the total yearly revenue from speeding tickets could easily exceed 8 billion dollars.

How would you like to own a business with such a guaranteed rate of return? All you have to do is to hire a few more officers, take away the "cushion," and watch the money roll in. If you are on the receiving end of this "road tax" do not blame the officer. He or she is just doing their job and most officers are truly concerned about your safety. They work long hours and see the public at their worst. They deserve our respect



and should be treated accordingly.

This is a political issue and can only be corrected by public pressure. Just as the numerous complaints in Oklahoma finally resulted in a new law restricting the number of speeding tickets, your input to your local representation is your most effective weapon. Fair and impartial enforcement for safety is needed. Unjust enforcement simply for the sake of revenue should not be tolerated. I recently stopped in a small town and picked up the local paper. In it the mayor was actually bragging about the number of speeding tickets issued to "out-of-towners." If you allow it in your town, then don't complain when it happens to you.

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