

# SB 720: The Safer Streets Act

*What Changed, Why It Matters, and  
How Elovate Makes It Work*



ID

California's red-light camera law hadn't been updated since 1995. The result: nearly 80 cities abandoned their programs – not because cameras don't work, but because the old framework made them too costly to operate and too controversial to defend. SB 720 changes that. Signed by Governor Newsom on October 13, 2025 and effective January 1, 2026, the Safer Streets Act creates a new, opt-in pathway that solves the enforcement, financial, and community-relations problems that caused programs to fail – without eliminating the programs that already work.

	OLD LAW (PRE-SB720)	SB 720 SAFER STREETS PROGRAM
Fine amount	~\$490 (base + surcharges + court fees)	\$100 flat for 1st offense – escalates to \$200 / \$350 / \$500 for repeats within 3 years
Violation type	Criminal moving violation – points, insurance impact	Civil penalty only – no DMV points, no insurance impact
Who is cited	The driver – required face photo ID, presenting privacy concerns	Registered vehicle owner via license plate – no face photo needed
Revenue use	General fund – fueled perception of revenue-driven enforcement	Must fund traffic-calming & safe streets infrastructure only
Low-income drivers	No relief – \$490 fine equally applied	Automatic 80% reduction for indigent; 50% for those up to 250% of federal poverty level
Annual reporting	Not required	Mandatory public report: violations captured, citations issued, dismissal rates
Existing programs	Criminal CVC framework continues	SB 720 is an opt-in alternative – existing programs continue unchanged

# 171

Red-light running deaths in CA (2022) – up 61% from 2012

# 6,872

Serious injuries from red-light running in CA between 2013 and 2022

# 2×

Severe & fatal intersection crashes doubled in CA over the past decade

# 21%

Reduction in fatal red-light running crashes in cities with cameras (IIHS)

The IIHS also found that cities which discontinued their programs saw **fatal red-light running crash rates rise by 30%**. Abandoning enforcement didn't resolve community concerns – it just cost lives. SB 720 provides the framework to bring enforcement back on terms communities can accept.

## Elovate's Proven Track Record in Red-Light Safety in California and nationwide

### ELOVATE IN CALIFORNIA

#### CITY OF NAPA

Red-light program launched January 2025 at four intersections ranked highest for injury collisions in the city (2016–2020 data). Each site recorded 17–18 injury crashes and at least one fatal or serious-injury crash in that period. Napa ranked 9th of 105 comparable California cities in total fatal and injury crashes (CA OTS, 2020).

- 14,799 total events captured in first 9 months
- 2,088 validated citations per month by September 2025
- ~1 confirmed violation every 3 hours, per camera
- 72% of captured events clear two-layer human review
- 100% of revenue reinvested in pedestrian beacons, speed feedback signs, youth bike helmets (Police Chief Rodriguez, Dec 2025)

#### CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS

Continuous program since 1997. 9+ intersections, 16 monitored approaches on Wilshire, Sunset, and Olympic Boulevards.

- 65% overall violation reduction after yellow-light recalibration (2014)
- 85% / 78% reduction at Wilshire & Whittier Drive (EB/WB)
- 12,720 citations in 2016; halo effect documented citywide by BHPD
- "It alters behavior not just at the intersection, but throughout the city." – BHPD Lt. Renato Moreno

### PROVEN NATIONAL TRACK RECORD

#### CHICAGO, IL

150+ APPROACHES SINCE 2003 (CURRENTLY 300 APPROACHES)

- 10% reduction in total injury crashes; 19% reduction in angle/turn crashes
- Spillover safety effect at non-camera intersections (Northwestern/CDOT 2017)
- Civil model, owner liability – structural analog to SB 720

#### BALTIMORE CITY, MD

- City-wide crashes down ~11% (18,007 in 2019 → 15,956 in 2023), with persons injured falling ~15% over the same period
- Injury crashes down 12% (5,716 → 5,023, 2019–2023) (MDOT-SHA Baltimore City Crash Data Summary)

#### FAIRFAX CITY, VA

- ~40% reduction in red-light violation rates after camera introduction (IIHS/Retting, 1999); citywide spillover documented
- Violation rate reduced up to 58% by months 22-27 of program (Virginia Tech / VDOT, 2003)
- Virginia civil penalty, owner liability model – structural analog to SB 720



We're not retrofitting our technology to meet SB 720. We've operated civil-penalty, owner-liability, license-plate-only programs in Virginia, Maryland, Rhode Island and others for years. SB 720 codifies in California what EloVate has been doing elsewhere. Here's what that means for your department:



### No face photo. No identification. No courtroom.

EloVate DriveSafe captures high-resolution rear license plate images – citations are issued to the registered owner, exactly as SB 720 requires. This eliminates the #1 cause of citation dismissals under the old law.



### Built-in public trust infrastructure.

Every event passes two layers of human review before a citation is issued. Your department approves every violation. No automated tickets go out without officer sign-off.



### Data-driven site selection support.

SB 720 requires crash data evidence of a 'heightened safety risk' before camera installation. EloVate provides the intersection risk analysis and documentation to satisfy this requirement and protect your program legally.



### Annual reporting – done automatically.

SB 720 mandates a public annual report on violations captured, citations issued, violation types, and dismissal rates. EloVate generates this data automatically – audit-ready, every year.



### Scaled fines and equity compliance.

The 80%/50% income-based fine reductions and three-year escalating repeat-offense structure are handled within EloVate's processing platform – no manual tracking required.

## Ready to Explore a Safer Streets Program for Your City?

**SB 720 is in effect now. EloVate is ready to deploy.**

**Contact Scott Stewart, California Sales Director [elovate.com/contact](https://elovate.com/contact)**

*EloVate is a California-active red-light enforcement operator with operational civil-penalty, owner-liability programs already running in Virginia, Maryland, and Rhode Island – the same model SB 720 now brings to California.*