



Ankin Law Office LLC

Protecting the Rights of Injured Workers

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Los Angeles May Abandon Red Light Cameras

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In the past, we [questioned the value of red light cameras](#), explaining that not everyone believed that the cameras were effective at preventing people from running red lights or saving lives.

A surprising group joined the ranks of those who question the efficacy of red light cameras: the Los Angeles City Police Commission. As reported in an LAWeekly [article](#), last month, the Police Commission voted unanimously against the Los Angeles Police Department's recommendation to continue the red light camera project for 5 more years at a cost of \$15 million.

The Commission was convinced to vote against the project, in part, due to the work of an LA resident, Jay Beeber, a TV and movie producer. Beeber explains that the cameras do little prevent accidents and save lives and that their use is motivated by political gains and, rather than resulting in revenue for the city, cost it millions of dollars:

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He says that of about 56,000 accidents studied in L.A., rolling right turns, which represent some 75 percent of the red-light camera tickets, caused only 45 crashes.

He started to realize “this was much more about revenue than safety,” and redoubled his efforts after Greuel’s report, which found that “the city actually incurred a net cost of more than \$1.5 million in 2008 and \$1 million in 2009 to operate the Photo Red Light Program.”

In fact, as explained in the article, there are conflicting results from various studies as to whether red light cameras actually increase safety. Studies funded by industries that stand to profit from red light cameras, such as the insurance industry, tend to show that the cameras increase safety, whereas other, more neutral studies prove otherwise:

One expert Beeber contacted, Dr. Barbara Langland-Orban of the University of South Florida, found in a 2008 study that red-light cameras increase accidents because drivers see the camera and slam on their brakes.

Safety issues aside, it’s not yet clear whether the Police Commission’s vote will stand—it’s possible that the Los Angeles City Council could seek overturn the vote. Only time will tell what the end result might be. One option on the table is to delay any further proceedings in order to conduct yet another safety study to determine whether, at the end of the day, red light cameras actually prevent [serious car accidents](#).

Howard Ankin of Ankin Law Office LLC (www.ankinlaw.com) handles [workers' compensation](#) and [personal injury cases](#). Mr. Ankin can be reached at (312) 346-8780 and howard@ankinlaw.com.

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[L.A. police panel: Kill red-light cameras](#) (seattletimes.nwsourc.com)

[L.A. Wants to Unplug Red Light Cameras](#) (abcnews.go.com)

[Reporting: Challenges to red light cameras span U.S.](#) (malexjohnson.com)

[LA councilmembers want red light camera program extended](#) (abclocal.go.com)