

SUBSTITUTE **RESOLUTION**

WHEREAS, There are currently 162 speed cameras installed in the City of Chicago, located in about 68 of Chicago's nearly 1,500 Safety Zones; and

WHEREAS, The City has established six geographical regions wherein no fewer than 10% of all speed enforcement safety zones will be located to ensure a geographically equitable distribution of the program; and

WHEREAS, Historically, the intensity of ticketing for speed cameras is highest in the predominantly Black and Latine areas of the city, and majority Black areas receive the highest number of tickets per household, followed by the majority Latine areas; and

WHEREAS, The built and social environments, including characteristics like lower population density and wide, multi-lane roadways, in predominantly Black and Latine areas increase the ability of drivers to more easily drive at excessive speeds; and

WHEREAS, In 2023, five speed cameras issued over \$2 million in tickets, and three of those five cameras were located on the South Side; and

WHEREAS, In 2023, 1,562,413 speeding tickets were issued, and speed cameras brought in \$46.9 million from the base fines paid on time and almost \$55.4 million from late fees; and

WHEREAS, The ability to pay precludes upper-income households from the most punitive effects of tickets fines and fees and may have negligible impacts on driver compliance while poor and working class families are more likely to incur penalties for non- or late payment, which can lead to towing, impoundment, debt, and corresponding collateral damages; and

WHEREAS, Ticket-induced economic hardships and shocks can further negatively impact the relationship of Black and Latine communities with law enforcement; and

WHEREAS, Revenues from automated speed enforcement systems can only be spent on four specific purposes, one of which includes initiatives to improve pedestrian and traffic safety; and

WHEREAS, The National Roadway Safety Strategy highlights how roadway design and other infrastructure factors play a significant role in managing speeds and can deter excessive speeding behaviors from occurring in the first place by designing roads and streets to be "self-enforcing" to offer drivers contextual encouragement – via lane width, intersection design, pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure, and other features – to drive at safer, slower speeds; and

WHEREAS, Many local and national transportation- and income equity-focused organizations advocate for an equitable, effective traffic safety approach that reduces reliance on enforcement through financial penalties by investing in street design, engineering, and infrastructure and to treat automated traffic enforcement as a temporary tool used only as part of a comprehensive street design and infrastructure improvement plan; and

WHEREAS, The Fines and Fees Justice Center recommends addressing income inequities in traffic enforcement by prioritizing non-financial sanctions and developing graduated responses based on the frequency and severity of the behavior in extreme cases; and

WHEREAS, The Fines and Fees Justice Center recommends employing ability-to-pay assessments, designating any revenue generated by automated traffic enforcement systems to discretionary and one-time expenses, removing sanctions for an inability to pay a fine, and ending the practice of adding fees, surcharges, penalties, or interest to fines if financial sanctions are employed; and

WHEREAS, California has employed an online option, "MyCitations", to allow people to look up their citation, answer a series of questions, and submit a request for a possible reduction in the amount owed and/or request a payment plan, more time to pay, or a community service option, saving the public and the courts significant time and resources while increasing overall payment compliance; and

WHEREAS, In 2018, Chicago's Fines, Fees, and Access Collaborative under the Office of the City Clerk reviewed the City's fines, fees, and collection practices and their impact on residents and provided fourteen recommendations for reform to increase compliance, evaluate existing practices, improve access and awareness, and build equity and sustainability; and

WHEREAS, In 2022, Chicago launched its Clear Path Relief pilot program to assist low-income motorists with existing vehicle-related debt and introduced Fix-It Defense for an expired City sticker or expired license plate ticket violation, and the City made the program permanent in 2023; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, do hereby call for the Traffic Compliance Administrator to establish an interagency working group that includes, but is not limited to, representatives from the Office of Equity and Racial Justice, the Department of Finance, the Department of Transportation, the Department of Administrative Hearings, the Office of Budget and Management, the Office of the City Clerk, and relevant community organizations for the purposes of assessing Chicago's vehicle-related enforcement structure and practices and designing a more equitable enforcement system, including fines and fees reform; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That such working group shall convene its first meeting no later than 60 days after the passage of this resolution and deliver its recommendations, including

any proposed legislation or rules, to the Committee on Pedestrian and Traffic Safety by August 1, 2025.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Daniel J. La Spata". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'D' and 'L'.

Daniel La Spata
Alderman, 1st Ward