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Statement of Tri-State Transportation Campaign Executive Director Veronica Vanterpool on Nassau County Executive's Decision to Cut Back School Zone Speed Camera Hours of Operation

"Nassau County Executive Ed Mangano's decision to cut back on the hours of school speed cameras sanctions the illegal and dangerous behavior of a few drivers at the expense of the safety and quality-of-life for Nassau County residents, workers, visitors and students. Speed cameras are just one measure in a toolkit of many that save lives by changing motorist behavior. Given the number of tickets issued thus far, they are clearly effective in capturing lawbreakers who recklessly and selfishly flout speed limits around the schools where they are placed.

Children are our most vulnerable community members, and everyone needs protection from speeding, which kills more people in New York than drunk driving. Unbelievably, the hostile and inflammatory rhetoric in this debate is misdirected at families of victims, safety advocates and elected officials who have supported safer streets. The repeated argument that no casualties have occurred within a school zone begs the question: why wait until a life is lost to seriously address safety concerns?

Requesting the speed cameras around schools is not a mistake to be rectified. It is a measure to be applauded. However, the County went wrong in tying the revenue to County budget holes instead of dedicating the revenue to capital, aesthetic, and livability improvements countywide that would increase traffic safety. If the County wants the public to believe in the benefits of speed cameras, the County must do better to link the problem to the solution, and it did not.

Tri-State is a non-profit advocacy group that does not receive donations or contributions from companies manufacturing camera technology. Our opinions and advocacy are based on saving lives."

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The Tri-State Transportation Campaign is a non-profit organization working toward a more balanced, transit-friendly and equitable transportation system in Connecticut, New York and New Jersey.