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Hundreds Of Drivers Were Likely Wrongly Targeted By Camera At LA Intersection

February 27, 2017 11:25 PM

Filed Under: [Citation](#), [Intersection](#), [Metro](#), [Ticket](#), [Watts](#)

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WATTS (CBSLA.com) – When the bell sounded, William Taylor of Watts became a man on a mission.

In August, the Vietnam veteran got a photo-enforced ticket in the mail to the tune of \$490 for crossing the Metro Blue Line tracks at [East](#) Century Boulevard and Grandee Avenue as the gates were coming down. He immediately thought he was being railroaded.

“It was absolutely wrong, and it’s taking [money](#) from people in this community who can’t afford a \$490 ticket on a bad traffic crossing,” Taylor said.

A traffic video shows showed the retired defense contractor driving his red Kia through the crossing as the automated arms start to come down, signaling the [train](#) is coming. He was cited for failing to stop for the railroad, but Taylor maintained he was in the right and fought the ticket.

“What I saw in front of me was a green traffic light that said I had the right of way,” Taylor said.

CBS2 confirmed Taylor’s allegations. We drove through the intersection and indeed found that the arms come down as the traffic [light](#) is still green, a notably confusing situation for drivers.

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In 2015, 34 photo enforcement tickets were issued at the intersection. In 2016, there were 807, an increase of more than 2,000 percent. That equates to almost \$400,000 in fines. The Metropolitan Transit Authority, which runs the Blue Line, argues the increase in tickets is due to improved [technology](#) .

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Jim Lissner, who runs a website called [Highway Hobby](#), which tracks photo enforcement tickets, has a different view. "It's a very confusing situation; it's a trap," Lissner said.

Taylor decided to fight the ticket, pushing his case before the MTA. In January, an agency chief admitted, "I have reviewed the merits of your claim and frankly, I agree with you. I believe the light phasing is confusing for traffic and that you should be refunded."

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"I felt vindicated," Taylor said regarding the ruling.

MTA spokeswoman Paula Tonilas told CBS2 that because of Taylor's case, the intersection is now being redesigned. Another traffic light will be added to remove confusion. However, since last month, the Los Angeles County Sheriff's [Department](#) has not stopped issuing tickets at the intersection despite the ruling on Taylor's case.

When asked about why people who may have wrongly been issued tickets were not being given refunds, Tonilas responded, "Well, we're not going to be in the practice of letting people off the hook who broke the [law](#) ."

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Chipotle Denied (@ChipotleDenied)

February 28, 2017 at 6:26 am



Tonilas responded, "Well, we're not going to be in the practice of letting people off the hook who broke the law." — Unless of course, you're an illegal alien.

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Jill Pol

February 28, 2017 at 8:53 pm

Paula Tonilas, the face of MTA, stupid, ugly and can't be put in prison.

[Reply](#)



James Walker

March 1, 2017 at 10:54 am

Mr. Tonilas is quoted:

When asked about why people who may have wrongly been issued tickets were not being given refunds, Tonilas responded, "Well, we're not going to be in the practice of letting people off the hook who broke the law."

Translation:

Regardless of how unfairly the intersection is controlled right now, we want the MONEY from every ticket – no matter how unfair many of the tickets actually are because MONEY is the true purpose for the cameras.

James C. Walker, National Motorists Association

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Marco Corona

March 8, 2017 at 7:17 pm

Wow, that woman comes across like a frozen *itch! She's wrong, knows it, yet continues to blame confused motorists for the highway robbery infractions. Smacks of DWP behaviors...

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