

# Opinion: How can state justify traffic fine shakedown?

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Unwilling (in the case of most Republicans) or unable (in the case of most Democrats) to approve new taxes, state lawmakers are squeezing citizens to raise revenue in less obvious but nonetheless onerous ways.

We are talking about soaring traffic fines that have nothing to do with deterrence but all to do with revenue generation. They cause disproportionate harm to students and people of modest means, and they undermine our system of justice.

Three years ago, it would have cost \$371 if you were caught by a red-light camera failing to make a complete stop before turning into an intersection.

Today, that same violation costs \$470, a 37 percent increase. Is the crime 37 percent more egregious? Or are state and local governments, the courts and other publicly financed enterprises that support themselves with these fines just more desperate?

Desperation is the answer.

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