

Enforcement of Law Against Violations of Dedicated Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) Lanes in the Legal Systems of Indonesia and the United States

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Abstract. *This article examines the legal framework and law enforcement mechanisms addressing violations of exclusive Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) lanes, with a primary focus on the TransJakarta system in Indonesia and a comparative perspective with practices in Minneapolis and Austin, United States. The misuse of dedicated BRT lanes by unauthorized vehicles remains a persistent urban transport problem that undermines service efficiency, travel time reliability, and public trust in mass transportation systems. Despite the existence of clear legal norms, weak compliance and inconsistent enforcement continue to challenge the effectiveness of BRT operations. This research applies a normative juridical method using statutory and comparative approaches. Primary legal materials include national traffic and transportation laws, regional regulations of the Jakarta Provincial Government, and municipal ordinances in selected U.S. cities. Secondary legal materials consist of academic journals, policy reports, and official government publications related to public transportation and traffic law enforcement. The findings indicate that Indonesia relies heavily on a centralized regulatory framework supported by police enforcement and electronic traffic law enforcement (ETLE), while enforcement consistency and technological coverage remain limited. In contrast, cities in the United States emphasize localized regulation, automated enforcement systems, and administrative sanctions designed to create a deterrent effect. This study concludes that strengthening inter-agency coordination, expanding evidence-based automated enforcement, harmonizing sanctions between national and local regulations, and enhancing public legal awareness are essential to improving compliance and ensuring the sustainability of BRT systems as a backbone of urban mobility.*

Keywords: *Bus; Enforcement; Public; Transportation; Violation.*

1. Introduction

Public transportation plays a crucial role in modern urban life. The demand for public transportation modes continues to increase in line with population growth and the expansion of settlements in large cities (Wijayanto, 2019). One of the most widely used public transportation systems in the world is the Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) system. Bus Rapid Transit is a bus-based mass transit system designed to provide fast, comfortable, and cost-effective mobility for urban transportation. In its development, the concept of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) emerged from initiatives by urban planners and city officials in Latin America who faced significant challenges in providing effective and affordable urban transportation systems. Since the rapid growth of urban centers in the region during the 1970s, pressure on public transportation systems increased sharply. Limited financial resources and a high level of public dependence on mass transportation necessitated a new paradigm in urban mobility. One of the innovative solutions that emerged was the BRT system, often described as a “surface metro,” which operates using exclusive bus lanes. BRT developers in Latin America understood that the primary objective of transportation systems is not to move vehicles, but to move people quickly, efficiently, and affordably.

Over time, the BRT concept has continued to evolve and has been adopted by various cities around the world as a low-cost yet high-quality urban transportation solution. BRT is designed as a customer-oriented transportation service that provides fast, comfortable, and efficient mobility. This system is also known by various names, such as High-Capacity Bus System, Bus Metro, Express Bus System, or Busway System. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) has been globally recognized as one of the solutions for improving the speed and reliability of urban public transportation. BRT facilities generally include dedicated lanes that may only be used by public transportation vehicles in order to avoid congestion (lane sterilization) and accelerate travel time (Wright & Hook, 2003). Law enforcement on these dedicated lanes is therefore a key factor in ensuring that the objective of improving public service delivery can be achieved.

In many countries, including Indonesia and the United States, laws and regulations prohibit the misuse of dedicated lanes and impose sanctions on violators. For example, Law No. 22 of 2009 on Road Traffic and Transportation mandates the sterilization of busway lanes, with a maximum fine of IDR 1,000,000 for passenger cars and IDR 500,000 for motorcycles that illegally enter busway lanes (Antara News, 2015). Regional regulations also strictly regulate the use of TransJakarta lanes. Jakarta Provincial Regulation (Perda DKI Jakarta) No. 10 of 2014 explicitly states that TransJakarta lanes must be separated from general traffic lanes and may only be used by TransJakarta buses. In other words, the normative legal framework in both countries establishes exclusive rights for BRT services to operate on their dedicated lanes (Sahrudin, 2019).

Despite the clarity of the legal framework, the implementation of law enforcement in practice often faces challenges. In Indonesia, particularly in Jakarta, violations of busway lanes remain widespread. A TransJakarta survey reported that approximately 300–500 vehicles per day illegally entered dedicated busway lanes on each corridor in 2019 (Kompas.id, 2026a). This situation has triggered public controversy, especially when violators include state officials or vehicles bearing government license plates. The National Transportation Services Commission and various transportation observers argue that “half-hearted” and inconsistent law enforcement actually encourages repeated violations. As a result, the perception that “it is acceptable to enter busway lanes” becomes increasingly entrenched among drivers, including civil servants, thereby undermining the effectiveness of dedicated lanes (Kompas.id, 2020).

On the other hand, several cities in the United States demonstrate relatively effective enforcement practices for BRT dedicated lanes, with lower levels of violations. In Minneapolis, for example, the city government has proactively strengthened enforcement of bus-only lanes. The Minneapolis Transportation Action Plan 2020–2027 explicitly identifies increased enforcement of bus lanes as a key strategy, including enhanced parking enforcement on dedicated lanes and support for automated enforcement systems (City of Minneapolis, 2026). In addition, Minneapolis applies red-colored pavement (methyl methacrylate) to bus lanes, a measure that has been proven to reduce violations by approximately 42–61% (Metropolitan Council, 2023). These design measures—such as signage, pavement coloring, and sanctions—collectively improve driver compliance with bus lane regulations. The case of Austin, Texas, is also noteworthy. Since the opening of dedicated transit lanes in the downtown area (the Guadalupe–Lavaca corridor) in 2014, local authorities have implemented strict enforcement from the outset of operations. The Austin Transportation Department increased fines for parking violations in bus lanes from USD 25 to as much as USD 500, and imposed moving violation fines of USD 200 for vehicles entering bus lanes. Local transportation commissioners emphasized that violations would be “very tightly enforced” to ensure that the public quickly adapts to the new system (Kanin, 2014). As a result, MetroRapid lanes in Austin have remained relatively free from misuse, allowing the transit priority system to operate more smoothly compared to cities with weaker enforcement. Overall, a comparative normative analysis between Indonesia and the United States indicates that the key factors contributing to low levels of BRT lane violations are a combination of firm legal policies and consistent enforcement. Various instruments—ranging from physical barriers and road markings to police patrols and electronic ticketing systems—work together to create a deterrent effect. This study therefore seeks to further examine law enforcement strategies, focusing on the TransJakarta system in Indonesia and the enforcement models applied to BRT lanes in Minneapolis and Austin (United States), as case studies of cities that have been relatively successful in maintaining driver compliance with dedicated public transportation lanes.

With regard to previous studies on law enforcement in TransJakarta dedicated lanes, several differences in perspective can be identified. Research conducted by Sunardi Manampiar Sinaga, Muchlis Hamdi, Sadu Wasistiono, and Sampara Lukman on the implementation of Bus Rapid Transit (BRT)-based mass transportation policies in achieving equitable and sustainable urban transportation in DKI Jakarta shares similarities with this study, particularly in terms of its object of analysis, namely BRT policy and regulation in Jakarta. Both studies examine how regulations and policies related to BRT dedicated lanes should be designed and implemented to ensure optimal operation. However, that study places greater emphasis on general policy implementation within the framework of equitable and sustainable transportation systems, whereas this study specifically focuses on the regulation of TransJakarta dedicated lanes and the enforcement of the relevant laws. Furthermore, the methodological approaches differ, as this study employs a normative legal approach enriched by comparative analysis of BRT lane regulations in other countries, such as the United States.

Another relevant study by Putri Amalia, Yusalina, Nurlela, Fajar Febriyadi, and Putra Agung Prabowo, entitled *Direction Change and Busway Lane Sterilization as Alternative Solutions to Reduce Accident Rates and Improve Traffic Order on Busway Lanes*, shares a similar objective with this research, namely reducing violations on Bus Rapid Transit dedicated lanes. Both studies emphasize the importance of concrete measures to regulate and sterilize busway lanes so that they can function optimally. However, that study focuses more on technical traffic engineering solutions, such as the implementation of direction change or contraflow systems for buses as practical measures. In contrast, this study adopts a normative approach by examining applicable statutory regulations and conducting comparative analysis with regulations in other countries where BRT lane violation rates are relatively lower, with the aim of formulating more effective regulatory recommendations. Meanwhile, research conducted by Dedin Sahrudin entitled *The Application of Maximum Criminal Fines under Article 287 Paragraph (1) in Conjunction with Article 106 Paragraph (4) of Law No. 22 of 2009 for Motorists Entering Busway Lanes in the Jurisdiction of the West Jakarta Metro Police* also shares similarities with this study in terms of its focus on law enforcement against violations of Bus Rapid Transit lanes, particularly TransJakarta lanes. Both studies examine how law enforcement officers carry out enforcement actions against illegal use of busway lanes. The key difference lies in the research approach: Sahrudin's study is more empirical in nature, focusing on the practical application of criminal sanctions in the field, whereas this study emphasizes a normative legal approach by systematically analyzing and dissecting the legal provisions governing BRT dedicated lanes.

2. Research Methods

Research Method This research employs a normative legal research method with a statutory and comparative approach. Primary legal materials include laws and regulations related to traffic and transportation in Indonesia and the United States, while secondary materials consist of academic journals, books, and official government publications. The analysis is conducted qualitatively by examining legal norms, enforcement practices, and comparative institutional frameworks.

3. Results and Discussion

The sterilization of TransJakarta's dedicated lanes is an effort to ensure that lanes reserved exclusively for public transportation remain free from other vehicles in order to maintain smooth public transport services. Its legal basis is strong, as regulated under Law No. 22 of 2009 on Road Traffic and Transportation, which prohibits any driver from violating traffic signs or road markings, with sanctions of up to two months' imprisonment or a fine of IDR 500,000. At the regional level, Jakarta Provincial Regulation (Perda DKI Jakarta) No. 5 of 2014 Article 90 paragraph (1) explicitly prohibits all motor vehicles other than TransJakarta buses from using these dedicated lanes. Violations of Article 90 paragraph (1) are subject to criminal sanctions of up to two months' imprisonment or a maximum fine of IDR 50 million. Similar provisions are found in Jakarta Provincial Regulation No. 8 of 2007 on Public Order, where Article 2 paragraph (7) states that "two-wheeled or four-wheeled motor vehicles are prohibited from entering busway lanes" (KumparanNEWS, 2017), while Article 61 paragraph (3) threatens violators with imprisonment of up to 180 days or a fine of IDR 50 million. Thus, the statutory framework clearly mandates the sterilization of busway lanes and the imposition of strict sanctions on violators.

Operationally, the Jakarta Provincial Government and the police have implemented various measures to sterilize TransJakarta lanes. According to the Governor of DKI Jakarta, busway lanes must remain sterile to avoid travel time disruptions and to function as emergency evacuation routes for certain vehicles (Antara News, 2016). In practice, the realization of sterilization includes infrastructure-based efforts, technological measures, and law enforcement actions. Several technical and operational measures have been undertaken to prevent and monitor violations of TransJakarta's dedicated lanes.

The first measure involves the installation of physical barriers. The Jakarta Transportation Agency has installed Movable Concrete Barriers (MCBs) or separators along several TransJakarta corridors. For example, in June 2016, the agency sterilized six corridors (1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9) by installing mini MCBs to close access gaps for other vehicles. These physical barriers restrict private vehicles from entering busway lanes.

The second measure is the use of surveillance technology. TransJakarta and the Jakarta Transportation Agency, in cooperation with the Metro Jaya Regional Police, have implemented Electronic Traffic Law Enforcement (ETLE). Currently, several ETLE cameras have been installed at busway violation-prone locations, enabling vehicles entering dedicated lanes to be automatically recorded, with traffic tickets subsequently sent to the violators' registered addresses (Antara News, 2025). In the future, the use of automated RFID-based portals is also planned, allowing only registered vehicles—such as ambulances or special state vehicles—to enter TransJakarta lanes. This combination of cameras and digital portals aims to create early detection of any violations.

The third measure consists of joint law enforcement operations. The provincial government regularly conducts joint operations with the Traffic Directorate of the Metro Jaya Regional Police, TransJakarta security personnel, and even the Military Police/TNI. Officers are stationed at entry points to TransJakarta lanes to apprehend vehicles that attempt to illegally enter them (Berita Jakarta, 2025). For instance, during a sterilization operation in 2016, the police recorded 408 violators on the second day alone, with violations dominated by motorcycles (Harianto, 2016). Enforcement actions continue to occur frequently, with recent incidents showing joint operations by the Transportation Agency, police, and military capturing dozens of vehicles in a single action. The Chairman of the Jakarta Regional House of Representatives (DPRD), Prasetio E. Marsudi, has even urged the placement of officers at every busway entry point to ensure firm law enforcement.

The fourth measure involves the enhancement of supporting facilities. The Transportation Agency has improved prohibition signs and road markings to make them clearer. These efforts are supported by public campaigns and coordination with the Government Procurement Policy Agency to prepare sterilization budgets. According to instructions from the transportation think tank INSTRAN, the sterilization of TransJakarta lanes is already mandated by both national and regional regulations, prompting the Jakarta Provincial Government to consistently incorporate sterilization into its work programs.

Finally, enforcement actions against violations continue to be carried out. All vehicles that enter TransJakarta lanes are now subject to ETLE-based ticketing without exception, as emphasized by the Director of Traffic of the Metro Jaya Regional Police in August 2025. "There is no difference—big motorcycles or small motorcycles—all are subject to ETLE." Strict sanctions under Article 287 of the Road Traffic and Transportation Law, namely imprisonment of up to two months or a fine of IDR 500,000, have been applied. Moreover, Jakarta Provincial Regulations impose additional penalties of up to IDR 50 million for violators. The number of violators prosecuted reflects the firmness of law enforcement. For example, in mid-2016, the Transportation Agency announced that hundreds of

violators were ticketed daily, with around 40 vehicles ticketed in a single raid on one corridor alone. Research data indicate a high level of violations: throughout 2019, at least 300–500 vehicles per day illegally entered dedicated lanes on each corridor, and the Metro Jaya Regional Police ticketed approximately 42,286 motorcyclists for entering TransJakarta lanes (Lingga & Kurniawati, 2022).

Through these various efforts, the Jakarta Provincial Government seeks to ensure that TransJakarta's dedicated lanes are truly sterile. The primary focus remains on the core principles of BRT systems: speed and punctuality. The Director of Operations of TransJakarta has emphasized that lane sterilization will remain a priority in 2025. These measures—ranging from physical infrastructure arrangements to strict law enforcement—are expected to increase public trust in TransJakarta and encourage a modal shift toward public transportation (ITDP Indonesia, 2009). Accordingly, the strict application of regulations and continuous supervision constitute the core of efforts to sterilize busway lanes in DKI Jakarta.

The legal system in DKI Jakarta prohibits any vehicles other than TransJakarta buses from entering busway lanes. Law No. 22 of 2009 on Road Traffic and Transportation, as well as Jakarta Provincial Regulations (Perda DKI Jakarta) No. 5 of 2014 and No. 8 of 2007, impose strict sanctions on violators. Pursuant to Article 90 paragraph (1) of Jakarta Provincial Regulation No. 5 of 2014, violators may be sentenced to imprisonment for up to two months and/or a maximum fine of IDR 50 million (Inilah.com, 2025). Jakarta Provincial Regulation No. 8 of 2007 also threatens violators with imprisonment ranging from 30 to 180 days or a fine of up to IDR 50 million. Law enforcement is carried out by the Traffic Directorate of the Metro Jaya Regional Police and the Jakarta Provincial Transportation Agency, both manually and electronically. For example, in November 2013, the police ticketed 8,534 vehicles for violating TransJakarta busway lanes within a period of 26 days. In daily practice, violators are immediately stopped and ticketed on the spot (Detikcom, 2025).

As a preventive measure, TransJakarta has tightened supervision through the installation of movable concrete barriers, ETLE cameras, and RFID systems so that only authorized buses are able to enter busway lanes (Hidayat, 2025). Emergency and certain official vehicles—such as ambulances, fire trucks, on-duty police vehicles, and TransJakarta operational vehicles—are permitted to use busway lanes. The strengths of law enforcement in Jakarta lie in the existence of a strong local legal framework and inter-agency collaboration among the Transportation Agency, the police, and TransJakarta, with substantial sanctions expected to enhance compliance. However, violations remain widespread due to low driver awareness, indicating the need for continuous and strict supervision.

In Minneapolis (United States), transit priority lanes (“bus-only lanes”) are regulated under Minnesota local law. The City of Minneapolis has expanded bus-only and HOV lanes along major corridors such as Lake Street and Hennepin

Avenue. According to local observers, violations of active bus lanes are illegal and subject to fines. Drivers are only permitted to enter such lanes to make right turns when signage explicitly allows it. In practice, police patrols and traffic enforcement officers take action against violators. For instance, Metro Transit reports that stopping, parking, or entering bus lanes during active hours is strictly prohibited (Harlow, 2025). Enforcement is carried out through standard traffic citations, with fines generally aligned with Minnesota traffic violation regulations. The advantage of this system lies in priority lanes supported by clear signage and road design, which facilitate smoother BRT operations. However, its weakness is that many drivers are either unfamiliar with or deliberately ignore the rules, thereby disrupting bus speeds. Enforcement that relies primarily on manual patrols is considered less effective, and to date, no dedicated automated camera system for bus lanes has been implemented, unlike pilot programs in other cities.

In Austin, bus-only lanes are standardized under the City Code of Austin, Title 12. Austin strictly prohibits general vehicles from entering bus lanes. City Regulation Section 12-5-43 classifies bus lane violations as misdemeanors punishable by a minimum fine of USD 500. The city government's official website confirms that left-side bus lanes are reserved exclusively for MetroRapid buses and vehicles making permitted right turns (City of Austin, 2026). Enforcement is carried out by local police through the issuance of traffic citations. The strength of the Austin model lies in the severity of fines, which creates a strong deterrent effect for drivers. Conversely, high fines are viewed as burdensome and require substantial police resources for routine enforcement. Overall, Austin's legal approach is similar to Jakarta's in terms of explicit and strict regulatory provisions, but it relies more heavily on punitive enforcement rather than public education.

Normatively, all three cities provide firm legal foundations; however, their implementation differs. Jakarta benefits from local regulations that actively prosecute violators, while Minneapolis and Austin rely on local ordinances and U.S. state-level regulations. In Jakarta and Austin, strict sanctions such as short-term imprisonment or high monetary fines are imposed, whereas in Minneapolis, although fines exist, they are relatively lower. Preventive measures in Jakarta and Austin are also supported by dedicated infrastructure such as physical barriers, signage, and segregated lanes. Minneapolis primarily relies on road markings and time-based lane activation. The advantages of Jakarta and Austin lie in their strong legal frameworks and firm enforcement, while their shortcomings include persistent violations and heavy demands on enforcement personnel. Minneapolis excels in dynamic signage systems and relatively orderly transit facilities, but looser enforcement results in less optimal compliance.

4. Conclusion

This study successfully addresses both research questions by demonstrating that the sterilization of BRT lanes in DKI Jakarta is implemented through a combination of national and local legal frameworks—namely Law No. 22 of 2009, Jakarta Provincial Regulations No. 5 of 2014 and No. 8 of 2007—alongside operational measures such as the installation of physical barriers, the deployment of task force personnel, joint enforcement operations, and the application of Electronic Traffic Law Enforcement (ETLE); furthermore, a comparative analysis with enforcement practices in Minneapolis and Austin reveals differing approaches, in which Jakarta emphasizes a strong regulatory framework and direct on-site enforcement, while several U.S. cities rely more heavily on automated enforcement and administrative mechanisms with deterrence-based fines, with the findings indicating that Jakarta’s formal legal strength has not yet been fully matched by technological coverage and enforcement consistency, whereas the U.S. model offers more effective technology-based monitoring but faces regulatory fragmentation across jurisdictions, leading this study to recommend the harmonization of sanctions between national and local regulations, the expansion of ETLE and evidence-based automated enforcement systems, strengthened inter-agency coordination, integrated public education programs, and sustainable budget allocation for enforcement infrastructure, which are expected to improve compliance, reduce violations, enhance BRT service performance, and encourage a shift toward public transportation.

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