



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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SB 870

DATE: February 27, 2020

SPONSOR: Senator Waldstreicher

ASSIGNED TO: Judicial Proceedings

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (Sara.Morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Police)

Drunk Driving Offenses – Ignition Interlock System Program

Senate Bill 870 expands mandatory participation in Maryland's ignition interlock system program to include an individual who is granted probation before judgment (PBJ) for driving under the influence of alcohol or under the influence of alcohol *per se* or impaired by alcohol. If the offender refuses to participate in or fails to complete the program, the individual's license will be suspended by the Motor Vehicle Administration until the program is successfully completed. Montgomery County Department of Police supports this bill.

The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that over the 10-year period from 2009 to 2018, on average more than 10,000 people died in alcohol-impaired crashes. Maryland made important changes to its impaired driving laws in 2016 by enacting Noah's Law (the Drunk Driving Reduction Act) that included increased penalties and expansion of its ignition interlock system program. While that law was a major step forward toward getting drunk drivers off the road, it didn't go far enough.

According to figures provided by the Administrative Office of the Courts, nearly 6,000 people received PBJs for driving under influence (DUI) violations in fiscal 2019. These drivers were found guilty of the offense, but if they completed a probationary period, they were not convicted of the violation. Because most drunk drivers are repeat offenders, it is very likely that those receiving PBJs will get behind the wheel again, and again, they will endanger themselves and everyone around them.

Interlock programs have been shown to be effective at reducing DUI recidivism. Montgomery County Department of Police respectfully urges that the Committee adopt a favorable report on SB 870.