



## The Greater Ocean City, Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Inc.

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT ON BEHALF OF  
THE GREATER OCEAN CITY CHAMBER OF COMMERCE  
SB 878 Worcester County - Special Event Zones – Prohibitions  
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee  
March 4, 2020**

The Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce represents over 930 businesses and organizations in the region. On behalf of those businesses, I am writing to express our **SUPPORT** of **SB 878 Worcester County - Special Event Zones – Prohibitions**.

This bill would give more authority to our police department and allied forces to enforce stricter penalties for reckless exhibition driving and maneuvering in our public streets and parking lots during special events. This bill would prohibit a person from engaging in exhibition driving within a special event zone in Worcester County; prohibit a person from committing certain violations of the Maryland Vehicle Law within a special event zone in Worcester County; defining "exhibition driving" to include the operation of a vehicle in a manner that produces abrupt acceleration or deceleration, skidding, swerving, raucous engine noise, gear grinding, or wheels losing contact with the ground; establishing certain penalties for violations. These violations put the public at great risk and are simply unacceptable. Unfortunately, this law is required after several years of seeing such behavior with no way to penalize it.

As Maryland's second largest city in the summer season and leading tourist destination, Ocean City' responsibility to keep our residents and visitors' safety becomes a challenge beyond our means during various motor events. While our local police department works adamantly with State and local allied agencies, the lawlessness and disorderly conduct during certain motor event weekends has reached a point of critical concern. Last year we made progress in our enforcement, with legislation directed toward speeding. Despite this measure, our concern remains for unaddressed acts of recklessness, which endanger thousands of event spectators, non-event guests and our residents.

In addition to safety of our citizens, participants and spectators, the motor events pose an extreme threat to the safety of our law enforcement officers. During these motor events there is a clear disregard for our police department

*Eunice Q. Sorin Visitor & Conference Center*

12320 Ocean Gateway, Ocean City, Maryland 21842 • 410-213-0144 • Fax 410-213-7521

[www.oceancity.org](http://www.oceancity.org) • [info@oceancity.org](mailto:info@oceancity.org)

and this law will give our officers real tools that are needed to help restore safety.

The Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce has been a part of the Motor Event Task Force and is working with police, businesses and citizens to ensure the public's safety during these events.

**For the aforementioned reasons, the Ocean City Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests your support for SB 878 Worcester County - Special Event Zones - Prohibitions.**

Please feel free to contact me with any questions regarding the position of the Greater Ocean City Chamber of Commerce at 410-213-0144 ext 102.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Melanie Pursel', with a large, stylized initial 'M'.

Melanie Pursel, President & CEO