



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 19, 2020

The Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chair of the House Judiciary Committee
6 Bladen Street, Room 101
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Chairman Clippinger,

I am testifying in support of House Bill 762, creating a Task Force to Study Impaired Driving and New Technologies.

This bill is important because a third of all Maryland traffic deaths involve impaired driving. In circumstances that called for motor vehicle operators to have their blood drawn, 10% of impaired drivers tested positive for THC; another 10% positive for opioids.

10 other states have pilot programs that test for THC levels.

According to the CDC,

- In 2016, more than one million drivers were arrested for driving under the influence of alcohol or narcotics. That's one percent of the 111 million self-reported episodes of alcohol-impaired driving among U.S. adults each year.
- Drugs other than alcohol, both legal and illegal, are involved in about 16% of all motor vehicle crashes.
- Marijuana use is increasing. 13% of nighttime, weekend drivers have marijuana in their system.
- Marijuana users were about 25% more likely to be involved in a crash than drivers with no evidence of marijuana use. It should be noted, however, that other factors- such as age and gender may account for the increased crash risk among marijuana users.

I understand that we currently have the Marijuana Work Group and that part of that group's agenda is to study the effects of driving while under the influence of marijuana. But, we do not have anything to study impaired driving regarding the use of opioids, PCP, heroin or any other drugs that we find in our communities.

Previously, there was a task force created to study the effects of alcohol and driving. Eight years ago, that task force produced a very comprehensive report that helped determine legislative initiatives to hone in on how to combat driving under the influence of alcohol.

This bill is proposing a task force of the exact same composition of this previous task force.

The use of drugs is occurring in our communities whether we like it or not. Therefore, it is imperative that we understand the best ways of dealing with individuals who drive under the influence of drugs.

I am asking for a favorable report from the Judiciary Committee,

Thank you for your consideration,

Sincerely,

Nicole A. Williams, Esq.

Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Esq.