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Judicial Proceedings Committee

Vice Chair, Baltimore County
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February 9, 2022

The Senate Finance Committee
The Honorable Delores G. Kelly
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 428 – Consumer Protection - Automotive Glass Repair or Replacement - Advanced Driver Assistance System Recalibration

Dear Chairwoman Kelly and members of the Committee,

I am pleased to bring before the Senate Finance Committee Senate Bill 428, which is legislation that will provide important consumer protections for the replacement and recalibration of automotive safety glass. You may recall that similar legislation was introduced by Delegate Barve last year, and I introduced the Senate crossfile. House Bill 519 ended up passing the Senate on the vote of 47-0.

I have brought with me a video of the activity that Senate Bill 428 addresses. I also attended an actual demonstration of the highly technical process for replacing a windshield and recalibrating the cameras and sensors on the vehicle last December. Last year's bill dealt with the standards for automotive safety glass replacement. Those standards are changing almost daily as technological advances place more cameras and other sensors in the windshields and other glass of our new vehicles. The purchase of a new or relatively new car is increasingly a purchase of information technology, as well as a device to get us from one place to another.

So here's the key question: If a windshield on a new or late model vehicle is damaged and requires replacement, how can we assure consumers that the replacement and recalibration is done properly? In other words, safety is the paramount concern of this legislation. If a windshield on a new car is replaced improperly – if it is not “recalibrated” to use the technical term - the consequences can be catastrophic for the future operation of that vehicle. An error in recalibrating the cameras and sensors of just one millimeter can result in a serious, life-threatening accident.

This year's legislation proposes an appropriate compliance and enforcement regimen for the process of repair, replacement and recalibration. While it was appropriate in last year's bills to have the MVA draft standards for the safety glass itself, including a requirement that it meet motor vehicle manufacturers standards, this year we need a solution for consumers who may have a complaint about the quality of services they have received, as well as an enforcement mechanism for any glass shops or similar repair facilities that do not comply with the standards.

It is also important to note that other states have recognized this important issue and are addressing it through similar legislation. Senate Bill 428 has identified the Consumer Protection Division of the

Attorney's General office for this purpose. I am pleased to report that the AG will be supporting the bill, and that the MVA, while continuing to monitor this issue, has not objected.

This year's bill was brought to my attention by Safelite, whom you probably know is a leading provider of automotive safety glass repair and replacement services. I understand that the insurance industry is supportive of the bill, and we have also been working with the Auto Glass Safety Council, who was active in last year's effort. As is often the case, there may be some clarifying amendments that are needed to improve the bill, and I hope the Committee will consider both this important piece of legislation and any amendments that may be offered.

I appreciate the Committee's consideration of Senate Bill 428 and will be more than happy to address any follow-up questions the Committee may have.