

Written Testimony

HB928

Motor Vehicles-Off-the-Road Motorcycles-Local Regulation and Enforcement

March 2, 2023

Good afternoon, Chairman Barve and esteemed members of the Environment and Transportation Committee. I'd like to offer testimony to support HB928, which will help local municipalities address the problems of off-the-road motor vehicles. In the city of Hagerstown, these vehicles driven by negligent drivers have been more than a nuisance. I have witnessed on many occasions that drivers of these vehicles nearly cause accidents. I was involved in an incident during the summer of 2022 while driving through the city of Hagerstown where a person drove a motor vehicle/dirt bike between my car and another car in the right lane. I slammed on my brakes to avoid hitting the person on the dirt bike, as he sped away laughing and threw up a nonverbal hand gesture.

I have witnessed drivers of these off-road vehicles bob in and out of traffic; drive on sidewalks, and drive in between lanes of traffic as motorists in cars brake to avoid causing an accident. Our law enforcement has minimal tools in their toolkit to address this dangerous problem in our city. Giving Hagerstown and other municipalities lawful liberty to regulate the operation of and register off-the-road motorcycles and ATVs to be registered is a step in the right direction.

If this bill passes into law, it will not take effect until October of 2023. With summer on the horizon, I'm willing to bet drivers of these off-road vehicles will be out and about in our city streets. Prayerfully no accidents will occur, and no one will be injured.

To Delegate Wivell and Delegate Boyce, thank you for proposing this piece of legislation and understanding the seriousness of these off-road vehicles that are driven negligently and illegally. I'm hopeful your colleagues will vote in support of this bill, and it passes successfully out of the House and on to the Senate, then on to Governor Moore's desk to become law. Thank you for your time and the work you do on behalf of all Marylanders. I urge the committee to favorably support this piece of legislation.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Brenda J. Thiam

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