



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

SB 252

DATE: February 15, 2023

SPONSOR: Senator Carozza, *et al.*

ASSIGNED TO: Judicial Proceedings

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

POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Police)

Reckless and Negligent Driving – Death of Another – Must-Appear Violations (Sherry's and Christian's Law)

Senator Bill 252 requires that a person charged with reckless or negligent driving that results in the death of another person must appear in court and may not prepay the fine. Montgomery County Department of Police supports this legislation.

Reckless driving is a crime in Maryland that is classified as a misdemeanor – currently subject to six points and a “scheduled” fine of \$500. Negligent driving is also classified as a misdemeanor and subject to points, but violators receive a lesser “scheduled” fine of \$180 if contributing to an accident. Reckless driving involves “wanton or willful disregard” for safety of persons or property whereas negligent driving involves driving in a “careless and imprudent manner” that endangers life or property. Senate Bill 252 provides that reckless and negligent driving contributing to the death of a person should be penalized more strongly than the same acts that merely damage property. Drivers whose reckless or negligent actions have contributed to the death of another person will no longer have the option of prepaying a scheduled fine and will instead be required to appear in court to deliver greater accountability.

Senate Bill 252 will strengthen Maryland's vehicle laws, and as such, Montgomery County Department of Police urges that the Committee adopt a favorable report.