

Department of State Police Position Paper SB 1081.

Uploaded by: Joey Sybert

Position: FAV



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: March 6, 2024

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 1081 **POSITION:** Support

BILL TITLE: Education – Public Schools – Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation establishes the Driver Education in Public Schools Grant Program and the State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Program. The legislation changes the fine structure administered by the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) for a lapse or termination of insurance. Finally, the bill increases the funding to the Vehicle Theft Prevention Fund.

Under current law, the Vehicle Theft Prevention Fund receives \$2 million from the Uninsured Motorists Fee collected by the MVA. The Vehicle Theft Prevention Council (VTPC) administers the fund, through grant awards the Council will support programs intended to reduce motor vehicle theft, improve administration of motor vehicle theft laws, improve or create programs to eliminate vehicle theft by juveniles, enhance vehicle theft prosecutorial efforts, inform motor vehicle owners of the financial and social costs of vehicle theft, and teach methods of motor vehicle theft prevention.

The VTPC has been receiving the same allocation since 1994 as costs for the grantees have increased substantially over the last 29 years. The VTPC has expanded to fund carjacking programs in the Baltimore County/City and Prince George's County and should this legislation pass the Council would like to provide additional funding for carjacking programs in Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery County.

In 2021, there were 11,143 vehicle thefts, an increase from the 10,683 reported in 2020. The unofficial vehicle thefts for 2022 are 13,662 and for 2023 are 33,628 with the biggest increases being in Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Frederick County, Montgomery County and Prince George's County. With this increase in funding the VTPC will continue to fund programs that help fight the increase of vehicle thefts, carjacking and its related crimes.

Senate Bill 1081 provides the Council with the means to increase funding for efforts to reduce auto theft and its related crimes by providing additional funding to those areas mostly impacted by the increases in auto thefts.

For these reasons the Department of State Police urges the Committee to give SB 1081 a favorable report.

SB 1081.Drivers Education and Field Trip Grants.pd

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: FAV

BILL: Senate Bill 1081
TITLE: Education - Public Schools - Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips
DATE: March 6, 2024
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
Budget and Taxation
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) supports Senate Bill 1081 to establish the Driver Education in Public Schools Grant Program to provide grants to public schools and nonprofit organizations to assist in offering driver education courses to students. In addition, the bill would establish the State Aided Institutions Field Trip Grant Program to assist public schools in transporting students on field trips to these State–aided educational institutions.

MABE believes that the programs proposed by this legislation will meaningfully enhance equitable student access to well-rounded educational experiences. MABE has always supported the State Aided Institutions Program, which includes many wonderful museums, theaters, nature centers, and a variety of other programs, as described below:

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) provides annual grants to qualified non-profit organizations that provide enriching, educational programs to Maryland students. Eligible programs provide learning experiences that align to the State’s curricular and educational priorities and cannot be replicated in the classroom.

These educational opportunities emphasize experiential learning and one-on-one support services. This includes, but is not limited to, free or reduced admission, full-day and residential field trips with hands-on activities, mentoring, and tutoring. Pre- and post- visit activities for teachers can be used to connect the experiences to the classroom curriculum. In addition, professional development opportunities for teachers that link the SAI programs to the classroom are also funded.

Importantly, MABE has adopted Educational Equity as a core value. MABE’s equity core value states: “We champion educational equity and excellence for each student.” MABE’s definition of educational equity states: "For MABE, educational equity in Maryland means providing access to essential academic, social, emotional, and economic supports in order to engage each student in rigorous instruction with appropriate educational resources to achieve their highest potential." The association takes very seriously the consideration of educational equity in adopting legislative priorities and bill positions.

In this light, MABE supports the thoughtful expansion of equitable student access to educational enrichment experience through field trips to State Aided Institutions, as well as improved access to drivers education and the expanded economic opportunities for our state’s youth with drivers licenses.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 1081.

SB1081 - National Aquarium - Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Ryan Fredriksson

Position: FAV



NATIONAL AQUARIUM[®]

Date: March 6, 2024

Bill: SB 1081 Education - Public Schools - Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips

Position: Support

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for **Senate Bill 1081 - Education - Public Schools - Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips**, which will create a State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Fund to provide schools transportation funding for field trips to State-aided educational institutions, like the National Aquarium.

For over 40 years, the National Aquarium has welcomed tens of thousands of students from every jurisdiction in Maryland annually for school field trips. Over the last five years, the Aquarium's Maryland School Field Trip Program has welcomed 250,000 participants, nearly all free of charge. The State-Aided Educational Institutions (SAI) grant, administered by the Maryland State Department of Education, supports approximately 40% of the National Aquarium's cost to administer our field trip program, and the Aquarium underwrites all the remaining costs associated with continuing to admit Maryland students for free.

Unfortunately, transportation to the National Aquarium is one of the most significant barriers schools face to participating in field trips. Whether visiting from a local neighborhood in Baltimore City, or traveling from Garrett or Somerset Counties, transportation is a seemingly universal challenge. State policy dictates that SAI funding "may not be used for transportation of students". Therefore, despite many schools being able to attend the National Aquarium free of charge, transportation costs can make the field trip unaffordable.

The National Aquarium appreciates the idea of a grant program to help offset transportation costs for schools trying to visit several of our state's high quality educational institutions. Maryland students will benefit from having greater access to these organizations. We particularly appreciate that funding will be prioritized to schools who need it the most and that it may be provided prospectively, and not only as a reimbursement of expenses incurred, because the upfront costs may be a barrier for some schools.

We appreciate the Committee's consideration of this legislation. **We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 1081.**

Contact:

Ryan Fredriksson

Vice President, Government Affairs

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SB1081_Sen. McCrays Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: tamika winkler

Position: FAV

CORY V. MCCRAY
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Health and Human Services

Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Executive Nominations Committee

Legislative Policy Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes on Senate Bill 1081

**Title: Education - Public Schools - Driver Education
and Transportation to Field Trips
Budget & Taxation Committee
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Hearing: March 06, 2024**

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to request your favorable vote on **Senate Bill 1081** (Education – Public Schools – Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips). This bill establishes the Driver Education in Public Schools Grant Program and the State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Grant Program. Both programs seek to enhance to the educational experiences and the safety of students across the state.

Under **SB1081**, the Driver Education in Public Schools Grant Program ensures that all students all students have access to comprehensive driver education courses. This grant offers a vital course to students by equipping them with the knowledge and skills necessary to become responsible and safe drivers while in school. Offering driver education to students not only promotes safer roads and reduce accidents but empowers our young people with lifelong skills.

The State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Grant Program aims to enrich the educational experiences of our young scholars. Field trips seeks to give students a hands-on learning and real-world experience and help to connect some of the concepts learned in the classroom. However, transportation costs can often pose a barrier to accessing these valuable opportunities, particularly for schools with limited resources.

Significance and Impact: The significance of **SB1081** is it adjusts the allocation of penalties for the termination or lapse of required vehicle security. A portion of the fines will support the Driver Education in Public Schools Fund and the State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Fund. This aligns with the goals of promoting safety and helps to enhance educational opportunities for students while demonstrating a commitment to effectively utilizing resources.

In closing, I urge you to support **Senate Bill 1081**. By establishing these grant programs and reallocating fines from penalties for the termination or lapse of required vehicle security to support them, we can make significant strides in promoting safety on our roads and also enriching the educational experiences of our students.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cory V. McCray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long horizontal stroke.

Cory V. McCray
45th District

AVAM Testimony for 3-6-24 Hearing Bill 1081 PDF.pd

Uploaded by: Valerie Williams

Position: FAV



**Testimony regarding Senate Bill 1081
Education, Public Schools, Driver Education &
Transportation to Field Trips**

**To: Chairman Guy Guzzone, Chairman, & Committee Members
Maryland Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**

Hearing Date: March 6, 2024

Dear Chairman Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and other Members of the Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the American Visionary Art Museum (AVAM) to request your favorable vote on **Senate Bill 1081**, particularly addressing the State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Grant Program.

This program, which aims to enrich the educational experiences of young scholars, has particular significance for AVAM. Our Education Team has received repeated feedback that the largest issue prohibiting field trips for students is transportation -- to the extent that we have begun adding line-items into proposals to private foundations, requesting money to fund buses. I'm certain other museums experience the same issue.

While AVAM already welcomes over 1000 students from Maryland Title I schools each year for free workshops and tours, this number could expand greatly with funding from the State for transportation to bring students and educators to the museum. Especially with arts programs in public schools diminishing, arts educational programming such as AVAM offers is vital to an enriching, well-rounded education and life.

Thank you for all the hard work you do every year on behalf of the Arts in Maryland and Maryland students, and thank you in advance for your consideration of this testimony.

Respectfully,

Valerie S. Williams
Interim Co-Executive Director

MAIF - FWA - Testimony - SB 1081 - 3-6-24.pdf

Uploaded by: Dennis Carroll

Position: FWA



POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Date: March 6, 2024

Position: **Favorable with Amendments**

Bill Number: Senate Bill 1081

Bill Title: Education – Public Schools – Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips

The Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund

Maryland Automobile Insurance Fund (MAIF) was created in 1973 with two distinct functions. First, MAIF's Insured Division provides automobile insurance to Maryland residents that have been turned down by two insurance companies or canceled or non-renewed by one. *Insurance Article §20-301*. Second, MAIF's Uninsured Division administers the State's program to provide financial recovery to Maryland residents who are innocent victims in automobile accidents where there is no other collectible insurance. *Insurance Article §20-601*. For example, if a pedestrian who does not own a vehicle is injured by an uninsured driver, the victim can file a claim with the Uninsured Division.

Senate Bill 1081 provides additional funding to enable the Uninsured Division to continue to administer and pay claims under *Insurance Article §20-601*.

Senate Bill 1081 Review and Analysis:

The Uninsured Division funding is through an allocation of uninsured motorist penalty fines under *Transportation Article §17-106*, collections against at fault drivers who caused the injury and investment income. MAIF's share of the uninsured motorist penalty fines is a fixed sum, increased annually by the Consumer Price Index (CPI). *Transportation Article §17-106*.

In 2022, MAIF's statutory fine allocation was \$4.3 million and in 2023 was \$4.5 million. This increase resulted from approximately a 4% CPI increase. This funding is proving to be inadequate in light of much higher inflation in the insurance industry, increased claims and reduced collections. Senate Bill 1081 would provide much needed additional funding and, with amendments, would annualize this funding.

In 2023, MAIF's Uninsured Division estimated income totaled \$5.4 million -- \$4.5 million allocation from the fines, \$676,428 in collections and \$232,054 in net investment income. Claims, claims adjustment expenses, and other expenses totaled \$8.6 million. The 2023 year-end surplus is negative (\$1,359,267). It is anticipated the surplus deficit will grow in subsequent years without an additional allocation of the uninsured motorist penalty fines.

This funding has not kept pace with increased claims and expenses. Claim payments and provision for anticipated future payments increased by \$2.2 million from \$1.3 million in 2022 to \$3.5 million in 2023. At the same time, funding from the fines increased only \$200,000.

MAIF's Uninsured Division experience is consistent with general insurance industry trends. Insurance costs have increased much faster than the general inflation level due to increases in claim severity, rising medical costs, increased costs in auto parts due to supply chain issues, and other factors. In fact, the CPI for motor vehicle insurance has averaged 13% over the past 3 years compared to 2.2 % for the CPI used to adjust MAIF's funding. As a result, the funding to the Uninsured Division has not been sufficient and the surplus level has eroded.

While claims and expenses have grown, collections have decreased. High levels of inflation and other economic factors have impacted the ability of uninsured motorists to repay debts to the Uninsured Division, even where we file suit and obtain a judgement. In addition, House Bill 280 (Ch. 149, 2020) deleted the authority to suspend a driver's license based on an unpaid judgment and this decreased the incentive to repay the Uninsured Division. It is also noteworthy that 50% of the Uninsured Division claim payments were caused by hit and run drivers, so no recovery is available for those payments. All of these factors have led to decreased collections.

As drafted, Senate Bill 1081 increases the MAIF fine allocation for fiscal year 2026 only, from a projected \$4.5 million to \$6 million, an additional \$1.5 million. For other fiscal years, MAIF would receive the current fine allocation with adjusted CPI. Therefore, the one-time only additional fiscal year 2026 funding provided in Senate Bill 1081 still leaves the MAIF Uninsured Division with an ongoing negative surplus.

MAIF has provided the sponsor amendments for Senate Bill 1081 to annualize the additional funding. The amendment would allocate an additional \$2,500,000 from the uninsured motorist fines. This amount would be added to the base, adjusted annually by the CPI, for the exclusive use of the Uninsured Division of MAIF to maintain financial stability to pay claims. Under the amendment, the enhanced funding would start in Fiscal Year beginning July 1, 2024 (FY 2025) and the amendment amends the effective date accordingly. In regard to MAIF, the amendments mirror House Bill 1482.

Conclusion

For these reasons, MAIF urges a favorable report with amendments on Senate Bill 1081.

For Information:

Sandra Dodson – Government Relations

667-210-5182

MAIF - FWA - Testimony - SB 1081 - 3-6-24.pdf

Uploaded by: Sandra Dodson

Position: FWA



POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

Date: March 6, 2024

Position: Favorable with Amendments

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Conclusion

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For Information:

Sandra Dodson – Government Relations

667-210-5182

SB1081 - MVA – Public Schools - Driver Education a

Uploaded by: Pilar Helm

Position: INFO

March 6, 2024

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Chair, Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 1081 – Education - Public Schools - Driver
Education and Transportation to Field Trips***

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information on Senate Bill 1081 for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 1081 would create several new funds aimed at providing greater access to driver’s education and financial aid for school sponsored field trips, increasing the current penalty for lapse of required securities on vehicles in Maryland to provide the specified monies to the new funds.

The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) currently enforces required securities on a motor vehicle in the State. Should a lapse in insurance coverage occur, the MVA is required to charge a flat rate of \$150 for the first one (1) to 30 days and \$7 for each day thereafter up to \$2,500 per 12-month period. Senate Bill 1081 would alter the initial fee charged to \$100 for the first one (1) to 15 days and then an additional \$200 for 16 to 30 days. This would result in a doubling of the cost for a security lapse from 16-30 days compared to the present fees charged. Thereafter, each additional day of a lapse would be charged \$9 up to a total assessed penalty of \$3,000 per calendar year. That would be a \$2 per day increase up to an additional \$500 per year increase in assessed charges. If an insurance violation is not paid within the required period of time, the information is then passed onto the Central Collection Unit (CCU) at the Department of Budget and Management. The CCU charges the customer an additional 17% collection fee and offers the ability to create a payment plan.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 1081.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer
Administrator
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
410-787-7830

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090