

February 27, 2024

To:

Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Honorable Delegate Regina T Boyce, Vice
Chair Environment and Transportation
Committee Maryland General Assembly
House Office Building, Room 251
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

From:

Mindy Badin, Transportation Committee
Greater Olney Civic Association

Motor Vehicles - Allowing Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle and Reckless, Negligent, and Aggressive Driving

Dear Chair Korman and Vice Chair Boyce:

The Greater Olney Civic Association and I are in strong support of Bill #HB 1160 - Motor Vehicles - Allowing Unauthorized Use of a Motor Vehicle and Reckless, Negligent, and Aggressive Driving.

Four years ago, my son Brett died while trying to cross the street. I have been advocating for safer streets since.

On October 18, on hearing the news of what happened to Sgt. Patrick Kepp of MCPD, I first felt concern and anxiety for this outstanding police officer. As I learned more about the circumstances of the events that occurred, the rage and anger grew inside of me. The accused was a known entity to the police force, given the many times in the past he has driven recklessly at very high speeds, and his taunting of police - endangering lives.

This man had his license taken away. Who gave him the car keys to drive that night?

Reckless and drunk drivers and those who would lend their cars to these drivers are responsible. It's not enough to only punish the driver. Those who would lend their car to known aggressive or impaired drivers also need to pay the price of endangering the community.

We need to widen the definition of reckless driving. We need to make the penalties greater. We need to make it apparent that there will be consequences to lending a car to a reckless driver. And we need to punish these reckless drivers to the greatest extent possible.

Looking at the Maryland Crash Data Dashboard, speed-related crashes and aggressive driving have been on the rise over the past several years. In 2023, 161 roadway deaths are attributable to speed, 69 deaths to aggressive driving, and 113 deaths to impaired driving. It should not take so

many roadway deaths plus an almost fatal, intentional crash to tighten our laws. But unfortunately too many people are paying the price with their lives or their injuries to make our laws stronger. It need not be this way. Pass HB 1160 now to prevent more tragedies on our Maryland roads.

The Greater Olney Civic Association and I, personally, applaud these efforts by Delegate Wims to expand the definition of reckless driving and increase the penalties for those that would do harm, and to those that facilitate doing harm by giving their car keys. And we wish Sgt. Kepp only the best as he continues his recovery at Walter Reed National Military Medical Center.

Sincerely,
Mindy Badin
On Behalf of the Greater Olney Civic Association