



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB601**

**VEHICLE LAWS – STREET RACING AND EXHIBITION DRIVING—PROHIBITED ACTS,  
ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES**

**SUPPORT**

MR. CHAIRMAN, VICE CHAIR AND COLLEAGUES. FOR THE RECORD, I AM DELEGATE MARY LEHMAN AND I AM ASKING FOR YOUR FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF HB 601, STREET RACING AND EXHIBITION DRIVING—PROHIBITED ACTS, ENFORCEMENT AND PENALTIES.

HB 601 CALLS FOR INCREASED PENALTIES FOR DRIVERS WHO TAKE PART IN EXHIBITION DRIVING CONTESTS. THE BILL COVERS STUNT AND HIGH-SPEED DRIVING ON PUBLIC ROADS AND IN PARKING LOTS.

THIS MARKS THE THIRD CONSECUTIVE ATTEMPT BY THE MARYLAND GENERAL ASSEMBLY SINCE 2022 TO PASS LEGISLATION TO DETER THESE DISRUPTIVE AND DANGEROUS EVENTS. THIS COMMITTEE AND THE FULL HOUSE HAVE APPROVED SIMILAR APPROVED EXHIBITION DRIVING BILLS IN 2022 AND 2023. THE 2022 LEGISLATION WAS VETOED; THE 2023 BILL FAILED TO GET OUT OF THE SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE.

THE 2024 BILL DOES THREE MAIN THINGS:

- THE BILL MANDATES A COURT APPEARANCE; CURRENTLY A DRIVER IN A CAR CONTEST CAN PRE-PAY ANY FINES THAT ARE ASSESSED. WORCESTER COUNTY HAS BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE SPEED CONTESTS SIGNIFICANTLY BY REQUIRING MOTORISTS TO GO TO COURT AND FACE A JUDGE.

- THE BILL INCREASES THE POINTS ASSESSED AGAINST DRIVERS CONVICTED OF VIOLATING THIS LAW. DRIVERS WILL RECEIVE 8 POINTS IF THERE IS NO BODILY INJURY; 12 POINTS IF THE EVENT CAUSES BODILY INJURY.

**THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE 8 POINTS RESULTS IN THE SUSPENSION OF A LICENSE; 12 POINTS RESULTS IN A REVOCATION.**

- THE BILL INCREASES A FINE OF UP TO \$1,000 UPON CONVICTION FOR A CONTEST WITH OR WITHOUT BODILY INJURY, UP FROM \$500.

CHANGES FROM THE 2023 LEGISLATION:

- IT CITES AS POSSIBLE DEFENSES OF A CHARGE OF EXHIBITION DRIVING THAT THE PERSON ACTED IN A REASONABLE MANNER FOR SAFETY PURPOSES; OR WAS PARTICIPATING IN A PROPERLY PERMITTED PARADE
- IT REFINES THE DEFINITION OF EXHIBITION DRIVING RELATED TO CARRYING PASSENGERS ON PARTS OF THE VEHICLE THAT ARE NOT INTENDED FOR THAT USE, SUCH AS THE HOOD AND ROOF.
- IT REMOVES THE PROVISION THAT PERMITTED POLICE TO IMPOUND A VEHICLE INVOLVED IN EXHIBITION DRIVING FOR SAFETY PURPOSES.
- IT INCORPORATES LANGUAGE THAT ALIGNS IT WITH KEY PROVISIONS OF OCEAN CITY'S STATUTE

COLLEAGUES, THESE DANGEROUS STUNT AND SPEED EVENTS HAVE GROWN IN SCALE AND FREQUENCY IN PART BECAUSE OUR EXISTING LAW IS NOT INTENDED TO DETER THEM. ABSENT MORE SERIOUS PENALTIES, EXHIBITION DRIVING WILL CONTINUE TO DISRUPT OUR

COMMUNITIES, ENDANGER LAW ENFORCEMENT AND RISK SERIOUS BODILY HARM TO PARTICIPANTS AND PASSERSBY WHO ARE TRAPPED IN THE STREET BLOCKADES.

I URGE YOUR FAVORABLE REPORT.