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February 13, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee  
251 House Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

***Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 478 – Motor Vehicles - School Vehicle Drivers -  
Medical Examinations***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) offers the following letter of information for the Committee’s consideration on House Bill 478.

House Bill 478 would require a biennial Medical Examiner’s Certificate (MEC) for Commercial Driver’s License (CDL) holders possessing an S endorsement for school bus operation and additionally require such an exam for drivers of all school vehicles. This would increase the period between when a new MEC must be completed and filed with the MVA from its current requirement of every year for school bus endorsement holders.

The Code of Maryland Regulations (COMAR) has required an annual MEC since the 1980s and differs from the minimum standard of a biennial MEC required of CDL holders by the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration (FMCSA). In a survey of 14 other states, including Virginia, the requirement for an annual MEC, or even more frequently, is matched by at least six other states that have an annual exam standard for at least a part of the population endorsed for school bus operation.

However, some of these states such as Nebraska and Louisiana require an annual MEC or equivalent medical exam by law but require this of school bus drivers under the authority of the state’s Department of Education. Others, such as Rhode Island, require submission of and enforcement against failure to provide an exam to the local school district “School Bus Safety Office.” California and Connecticut have specific ages for a bus driver at which time an annual, or even more frequent in the case of Connecticut, medical exam is required but only a biennial is until that age has been reached. Finally, states such as Kentucky require an annual exam and the state’s Department of Motor Vehicles enforces the requirement.

Thanks to the new Customer Connect IT system completed in December 2021, the MVA was able to improve and simplify the process for submitting a required MEC for CDL holders. Now a MEC can be directly uploaded via the online portal instead of submitted by fax or postal mail, and an automated email confirms receipt of the MEC for the customer’s records.

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The new myMVA profile also allows for greater ease of communication for friendly courtesy reminders of upcoming deadlines for submission of paperwork or renewal requirements along with copies of all correspondence mailed to customers. Customer Connect and myMVA has truly upgraded the customer experience and elevated the premier customer service the MVA is able to provide Marylanders.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberations of House Bill 478.

Respectfully submitted,

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