



AMERICAN COUNCIL OF ENGINEERING COMPANIES/MARYLAND

HB 513: Motor Vehicles - Work Zone Speed Control Systems - Revisions (Maryland Road Worker Protection Act of 2024)

Position: Support

The American Council of Engineering Companies / Maryland (ACEC/MD) is the business voice for Maryland's engineering industry. We represent nearly 90 firms employing more than 7,000 engineers, architects, land surveyors, planners, scientists, construction inspectors and support professionals who design and improve our state's built and natural environment.

Engineering firms play a vital role in the successful implementation of infrastructure projects. From initial planning studies to community outreach, detailed engineering and the regulatory approval process, our professionals are engaged in all aspects of project development, oftentimes representing our clients' interests in the field. Our members also play a critical role in ensuring that projects are built as intended, by providing construction inspection services on behalf of our clients.

One such dedicated Construction Inspector was Sybil DiMaggio. With over 15 years of highway inspection experience, Sybil came to ACEC/MD member firm KCI Technologies specifically to support the implementation of the Maryland State Highway Administration's Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSMO) program, a series of projects designed to improve the safety, security, and reliability of our state's transportation network. Sybil was just 46 years old when, on March 22, 2023, she and five other roadway workers were tragically killed in a work zone along I-695. She left behind a husband, two children, loving parents, siblings, and many family members.

Hundreds of inspectors just like Sybil report to highway work zones every day in the hopes that their efforts will improve the condition of our state's road system. Aggressive and distracted driving, including excessive speeding are unacceptable practices and unnecessarily endanger construction professionals. The provisions within HB 513 will allow the use of fully electronic speed control systems through the work zone. Automated Speed Enforcement (ASE) systems are a crucial tool and have proven to be effective in changing driver behavior. While the state has identified several locations where these systems can be deployed, the program is currently limited by the number of ASE systems in use on any given day.

Multiple control systems, remote operated ASE systems, increased signage and enhanced civil penalties, as proposed in this bill, are important first steps in elevating the concept of work zone safety within the driving public. Our workers deserve to be protected through access to proper equipment and training and every available use of smart technology. It is our sincere hope that the state can find the financial resources to commit to a robust expansion of roadway worker protection provisions such as those within this bill. Their lives depend on it.