



# Transportation Alliance

February 1, 2024

## Testimony on HB 28 – *Pedestrian Fatality Prevention Act of 2024* – Environment and Transportation Committee

### Position: Favorable

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance supports House Bill 28, which increases the annual registration fees for certain cars and trucks based on vehicle weight classifications.

Recent reporting from the *Baltimore Banner* analyzed vehicular crash data and found that Maryland's roadways have become more dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists. In 2023, there were 3,605 crashes involving pedestrians and cyclists. That means that every day across the state about 10 people who are walking or riding a bike are hit by someone driving a vehicle. These crashes resulted in over 3,000 injuries and 152 deaths. And these pedestrian and cyclist deaths are just a portion of the almost 600 Marylanders killed in car crashes last year.

Commonly cited reasons for these crashes are speeding, impaired driving, and distracted driving. However, a contributing factor to all these reasons is the size of the vehicle that is speeding or being driven under the influence. Taller, heavier cars generate more force and are more dangerous when involved in crashes. A recent report from a researcher at the University of Hawaii found that a pedestrian hit by a full-size SUV is twice as likely to die compared to being struck by a car, under similar crash conditions.

Large SUVs and trucks are more ubiquitous than ever. According to data from JD Power, in 2010 about half of new vehicle sales were trucks and SUVs. By 2021, more than 3 out of 4 new sales were trucks and SUVs. Not only are there more of those types of vehicles on the road, but they are also taller and heavier than their predecessors. For example, the current model of the Ford F-150 truck, one of the most popular vehicles in the country, is 800 pounds heavier than it was 30 years ago.

House Bill 28 is common sense legislation that supports Maryland's stated Vision Zero goal of having zero motor vehicle-related fatalities or serious injuries. We urge you to pass this bill to help make Maryland's roads safer for everyone.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for House Bill 28.