

HB_737_Corrected_SponsorTestimony_DelegateLong

Uploaded by: Jeffrie Long

Position: FAV

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Environment and Transportation
Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 22, 2024

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Colleagues,

House Bill 737 seeks to amend current vehicle laws regarding slow-moving vehicles on our roadways. This bill proposes a crucial modification to the existing statute by repealing the provision that mandates slow-moving vehicles to travel in the right-hand lane or lanes solely on certain highways within designated geographic areas.

The extent of HB737 is to ensure that all slow-moving vehicles, regardless of location, are subject to uniform rules that mandate their operation in the right-hand lane, except under specific conditions such as overtaking another vehicle or preparing for a lawful left turn. This legislative change is about more than just enhancing traffic flow; it's about increasing road safety for all users, promoting the efficient use of our highways, and addressing inconsistencies in the current law that can lead to confusion among drivers and enforcement challenges.

The proposed adjustment is a step towards acknowledging the evolving dynamics of road use and traffic patterns across our state. By removing geographical restrictions, HB737 aligns with our commitment to safety, accessibility, and mobility for all Maryland residents and visitors, regardless of where they drive.

I urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB737. This bill represents a practical approach to updating our vehicle laws in response to the needs of our communities and the challenges they face on the roads. Together, we can make Maryland's roads safer, more efficient, and more accommodating.

Thank you, and I ask for a favorable report.

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HB0737 - SHA - Vehicle Laws - Slow Moving Vehicles

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO



Wes Moore
Governor
Aruna Miller
Lieutenant Governor
Paul J. Wiedefeld
Secretary

February 22, 2024

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

RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 737 – Vehicle Laws – Slow Moving Vehicles – Right-Hand Lane

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information for the Committee's consideration on House Bill 737.

House Bill 737 expands, to all Maryland roadways, the requirement for a vehicle traveling slower than the general speed of traffic to drive in right-hand travel lanes.

Currently, the requirement to keep right is limited to interstate highways in rural areas, where road congestion is traditionally less of an issue and where there are fewer traffic patterns requiring left lane exits or alignments. Any positive outcomes of House Bill 737 would be hard to quantify, and violations of the policy would be difficult to identify in areas with more frequent congestion and complex traffic patterns.

Additionally, the State Highway Administration (SHA) must inform slower drivers of the requirement to keep right on interstates located in a rural area by placing and maintaining signs at regular intervals on appropriate highways and through the dynamic message sign system located throughout the State. If House Bill 737 were to pass, SHA would be required to make a significant investment in new signs throughout the State to inform slower drivers of the requirement to keep right. While the exact impact of this requirement depends on the number of applicable roadways and the number of new signs that would be required to effectively communicate this message, SHA estimates that approximately 1,000 signs would need to be installed at an approximate cost of \$500,000 for installation.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 737.

Respectfully submitted,

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