



**County Council
of
Baltimore County**

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Izzy Patoka
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Wade Kach
THIRD DISTRICT

Julian E. Jones, Jr.
FOURTH DISTRICT

David Marks
FIFTH DISTRICT

Michael Ertel
SIXTH DISTRICT

Todd K. Crandell
SEVENTH DISTRICT

Thomas H. Bostwick
LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL
SECRETARY

March 7, 2024

VIA EMAIL/U.S MAIL
Baltimore County Senate Delegation
Maryland General Assembly
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB1495, Out-of-State Vehicles Improper Registrations

Baltimore County Delegation:

Today, we write supporting HB1495, *Out-of-State Vehicles Improper Registrations*, and ask the Baltimore County House Delegation to give a favorable report to this bipartisan bill. This bill will give Baltimore County the ability to tow vehicles that are improperly tagged in accordance with the timeframes already outlined in state law for new residents to acquire Maryland license plates.

This bill will not affect those who are in Maryland but have an out-of-state tag for legitimate reasons like those in the military, who are traveling nurses, students at a local college or university, or others that legitimately have an out-of-state tag but that currently live in Maryland. It simply provides a tool to close a loophole for those that are intentionally attempting to avoid Maryland law and drive on our roadways without insurance.

For decades, it has been an open secret that Maryland residents have been getting their vehicles registered in Virginia. *The Washington Post* reported decades ago in 1987 that as many as 40,000 Marylanders registered their cars in Virginia, costing the state up to \$10 million in lost revenue.

Virginia allows drivers to pay an uninsured motorist fee in lieu of buying auto insurance, and Virginia's Department of Motor Vehicles doesn't require that those getting registered live in that state.

We have noticed an increase in vehicles with Virginia plates in Baltimore County. This bill will give another tool for the County to address unsafe driving practices due to this Virginia loophole.

According to the MVA, at least 34,000 Maryland residents are suspected of circumventing Maryland registration laws. Though penalties exist, enforcement is complicated, and this piece of legislation would enable Baltimore County to address this danger to our roadways.

While this bill would address the primary concern of the Virginia license plate loophole, it would also help ensure that anyone who moves to Baltimore County properly registers their vehicle with the state of Maryland within a reasonable amount of time. As such, we kindly ask for a favorable vote on HB1495.

Sincerely,

Izzy Patoka
Councilman, Second District

Wade Kach
Councilman, Third District

Julian E. Jones, Jr.
Councilman, Fourth District

David Marks
Councilman, Fifth District

Mike Ertel
Councilman, Sixth District

CC:clb

cc: Thomas H. Bostwick, Council Secretary