



People on the Go of Maryland

SB0618

Vehicle Laws - Licenses, Identification Cards, and
Moped Operator's Permits - Notification of Non-apparent Disability
(Eric's ID Law)

Requiring that an original and renewal application for a license, an identification card, or a moped operator's permit allow an applicant to choose to indicate on the document the applicant's non-apparent disability; requiring the Motor Vehicle Administration to ensure that a certain license, identification card, or moped operator's permit include a notation of a non-apparent disability; and requiring the immediate implementation of training for law enforcement concerning interactions with persons with non-apparent disabilities.

Position: Oppose

March 27th 2025 at 1:00 pm

Senators Smith, Charles, Ferguson, Folden, M. Jackson, James, Love, McKay,
Muse, Salling, Sydnor, Waldstreicher, and West

Assigned to: Environmental and Transportation Committee

Written by Cody Drinkwater

Policy Coordinator - People On the Go of Maryland

Honorable Chairperson, and distinguished members of the Environmental and
Transportation Committee :

People On the Go of Maryland (POG) is a statewide self-advocacy organization, run for and by those with intellectual and/or developmental disabilities (IDD), and our mission is to promote self-advocacy throughout the state.

POG respectfully offers this written testimony opposing SB0618, because the idea that someone's disability information would be documented on their vehicle permit or other form of identification, is disturbing to us.

1. It is important to note that, although a non-apparent disability designation is voluntary in theory, once information is on someone's permanent record, it is there permanently.
2. We understand the most current version of this bill proposes an option to allow for somebody to delete this designation upon their request. However, it is not clear whether or not the Motor Vehicle Administration's system has been updated to allow for such a deletion. In the past, this information has been permanently kept on the individual's record.
3. The MVA is not the only consideration: One must also consider what may happen if this law is passed, and a future legislature decides that all people with disabilities, apparent or not, must have a designation on their driver's license or other identification.
4. We understand that the intentions of the supporters of this bill are good. People with disabilities want to have positive interactions with law enforcement, as well as other first responders. However, we believe that passing legislation of this type is not the way to accomplish this.
5. We are now living in a time where individuals and minority communities are being targeted, and their privacy is being violated. People in our community may be subjected to greater predatory behavior, if it becomes known by members of the general public that somebody has a designation on their driver's

license or ID. Having this information out in the open could potentially create harmful scenarios for people with disabilities.

6. According to the research done by POG and other disability rights groups in states where similar laws exist, no data has tracked whether such laws have any positive impact whatsoever in how police and other entities interact with people with disabilities.
7. Should this bill become law, police and first responders will expect people with disabilities to have designations on their identifications. People with disabilities who choose not to have a designation on their Driver's license or ID cards, will be treated differently.
8. Thinking longer term: Consideration should also be given to the possibility that the State of Maryland may be subject to a federal Executive Order (EO) – or other entities claiming to act on behalf of the federal government – requiring that the State share with the federal government, data that the State has tracked on certain minority groups, including people with disabilities. This would at the very least be a violation of privacy rights, as well as potentially opening the door to future persecution of minority groups.
9. Instead of this legislation, it would be more appropriate to provide additional training for police and other first responders on how to properly interact with the disability community. While the bill, as presently worded, does propose training, the specific training requirements are not outlined, and people with disabilities are not required to be part of the training.
10. Finally this legislation is unnecessary, because the MVA blue card legislation, already passed by the general assembly in 2019, allows for an individual to obtain a blue card from the MVA that they can fill out with their details and give to a police officer or first responder in the event of an interaction, without keeping their information in a database and exposing them

to further stigma. There also exist alternative forms of identification similar to the blue card that a person with a disability may buy on their own.

Once again, we acknowledge the positive intention of the bill's sponsors, but this is not the solution. We hope you will consider the potential consequences before passing such a bill into law.

Therefore People on the Go advises an unfavorable report on SB0618. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Should you have any questions. Please contact Cody Drinkwater or Mat Rice.

Thank you,

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