



SafeRoadsMD

PLEASE SUPPORT SB 698
“Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations
of Snow and Ice – Removal From Exposed
Vehicle Surfaces”



**MARYLAND COALITION FOR
ROADWAY SAFETY, INC.
URGES MD SENATE JPR
COMMITTEE SUPPORT FOR SB 698**

March 2, 2026

TO:

Honorable Senator William C. Smith, Chair
Honorable Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair
Judicial Proceedings Committee
Maryland General Assembly
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

FROM:

John Seng, Chair
SafeRoadsMD - Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.
(202) 468-7682, JSeng@SafeRoadsMD.org, SafeRoadsMD.org

Subject: Requesting Your Support for SB 698 “Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice – Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces”

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Members of the Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

On behalf of SafeRoadsMD, I respectfully request your favorable report on Senate Bill 698, the ““Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice – Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces” Act.”

SafeRoadsMD is 100 percent committed to reducing roadway deaths and serious injuries in Maryland to zero. This legislation addresses an easily preventable yet unfortunately recurring roadway hazard: snow and ice left on exposed vehicle surfaces that can dislodge at highway speeds and strike other motorists, law enforcement officers, and emergency responders.

Maryland witnessed this danger firsthand this winter:

- In late January, a large sheet of ice flew off a vehicle on Interstate 97 in Anne Arundel County, shattering the windshield of a sheriff’s cruiser and injuring a deputy who required medical

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treatment. At least two other Maryland motorists were injured that same week when chunks of ice struck their windshields. (WBAL-TV 11 News report: <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/officer-injured-windshield-smashed-sliding-ice-other-vehicle/70171805>)

- In Havre de Grace, a substantial piece of ice crashed through a windshield on I-95 northbound, sending two people to the hospital. (WBFF/FOX45 report: <https://foxbaltimore.com/news/local/people-hospitalized-ice-piece-crashes-through-car-windshield-havre-de-grace>)
- In Harford County, another large chunk of ice struck a vehicle traveling on I-95, severely damaging the windshield and causing injuries — underscoring the real-world consequences of ice dislodging from moving vehicles. (CBS News Baltimore report: <https://www.cbsnews.com/baltimore/news/ice-car-harford-95-tydings-windshield/>)

These examples in news stories are not isolated anecdotes. They are foreseeable consequences of failing to clear accumulated snow and ice before driving.

SB 698 takes a balanced and reasonable approach. The bill requires drivers to remove accumulated snow and ice from exposed vehicle surfaces — including roofs, hoods, trunks, windows, and the tops of trailers — before operating or towing a vehicle if that accumulation poses a threat.

It allows enforcement as a secondary action, minimizing unnecessary traffic stops. It establishes modest graduated fines to encourage compliance, with stronger penalties only when failure to clear snow or ice contributes to property damage, serious bodily injury, or death. As noted in the Fiscal and Policy Note, enforcement can be handled with existing resources and is not expected to materially affect state or local budgets. This is not a revenue bill. It is a responsibility bill.

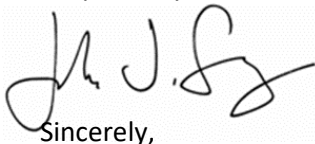
Clearing snow and ice takes only a few minutes. The injuries caused by failing to do so can last a lifetime.

Maryland already requires drivers to secure loads and ensure safe vehicle operation. Removing accumulated snow and ice is a logical extension of that duty. This legislation simply clarifies that obligation and aligns Maryland with other states that have recognized the public safety benefits of similar laws.

Every preventable injury we fail to address is a missed opportunity to move closer to Vision Zero. SB 698 represents a practical, fiscally responsible, and common-sense step toward safer roads.

SafeRoadsMD respectfully urges your favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,



Sincerely,

John J. Seng, Chair
Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.

cc: Rev. Dr. R. Screen, R. Weiss - Route 210 Safety Committee; SafeRoadsMD Board