
January 28, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 68 – Driver's Licenses – Driver Skills Examination
- Motorcycle Safety Awareness***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 68 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

SB 68 requires the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to update its knowledge test for first-time driver applicants with five questions related to motorcycle safety awareness, including visibility of motorcycles, proper lane positioning, safe following distances, and preventing crashes along with a fifth question left to the Administration to decide.

MVA is committed to road safety for motorcyclists who are considered vulnerable road users, similar to pedestrians and bicyclists, as they don't have the same protections motorists do in vehicles. As part of its Motorcycle Safety Program, the Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) collaborates with partner organizations to educate all drivers on how to safely share the road with motorcyclists. We strive to eliminate motorcycle crashes, increase motorcycle safety on the roads, and increase the number of licensed motorcyclists.

The MVA requires applicants to take and pass the knowledge test with at least 88% (22) of the 25 questions answered correctly with a standard time limit of 20 minutes. To develop the test, the testing system randomly selects from a bank of 138 questions, dividing the 25 questions into 18 different domains of knowledge. The format and content of the knowledge test is based on the best practices and guidelines outlined by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). Presently, the MVA has three questions regarding motorcycle safety in the test bank and is in discussion with the bill sponsor about expanding this subject matter.

Beyond the knowledge test, the MVA partners with the State Department of Education to create a standardized curriculum for driver's education schools in the State and provides the 10 units in its curriculum for the public to view via its website. The MVA further oversees compliance with curriculum standards taught in the approximately 150 driver's education schools across the state.

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Currently, Unit Seven (7) of the driver's education curriculum addresses motorcycle safety. This content includes visibility of motorcycles and the need to fully check a blind spot before changing lanes, avoiding sharing a lane with a motorcycle, leaving safe following distance behind a motorcycle (and the reasons why this is even more important compared to a typical vehicle), and ensuring to properly yield to motorcycles when turning and to pass with care and plenty of space to avoid a crash.

The MVA strives to ensure its driver's education curriculum provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date standards in driver education. The curriculum is periodically reviewed and updated as needed to ensure it meets current standards, especially when it comes to the safety of road users, including motorcyclists. Testing standards are also maintained and updated periodically to ensure ongoing best practices and national standards established by AAMVA are utilized by the MVA. Ensuring the MVA can continue to quickly adopt modern trends and institute changes in the field of testing driver's license applicants through flexibility in the statute requirements are an important component in the goal of reaching zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries on state roadways by 2030.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 68.

Respectfully submitted,

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