

# **SB 698-Accumulations of Snow and Ice-Removal From**

Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield

Position: FAV



## Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

P.O Box 905 \* Huntingtown, Maryland 20639

410-414-5406 \* 1-800-244-0102 \* Fax 410-414-5408

### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Vince Flook, President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland  
Will Cain, 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

DATE: March 4, 2026

RE: **SB 698 - Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) **SUPPORT** SB 698, which prohibits a person from operating or towing a vehicle without removing accumulated snow and ice from exposed vehicle surfaces. It also provides for enhanced penalties if a violation causes a property damage, serious bodily injury, or death.

Towing and recovery operators are among the first to arrive on the scene of crashes caused by snow and ice dislodging from vehicles. We see firsthand the devastating results of accumulated snow and ice flying from a vehicle's roof, hood, trailer, or cab and striking another motorist. The results include shattered windshields, multivehicle collisions, serious bodily injury, and even, in the worst instances, fatalities.

SB 698 is a common-sense safety bill. A driver already has the responsibility to ensure their vehicles and loads are secure. Just as towing and recovery professionals must properly secure every vehicle to a tow apparatus before transporting it, every driver should ensure that snow or ice does not detach and endanger others.

For these reasons, the Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) **SUPPORT** SB 698 and urge a favorable committee report.

**SB698\_Favorable\_Testimony\_Cashenna\_Cross.pdf**

Uploaded by: Dr Cashenna A Cross

Position: FAV

**Chair and Members of the Committee,**

My name is Dr Cashenna A Cross. I serve as a municipal leader in Prince Georges County and have spent more than two decades in uniform and public service committed to protecting lives and strengthening communities.

I respectfully submit favorable testimony for Senate Bill 698.

Winter weather presents predictable risks. In municipal government, we prepare for snow response, coordinate road treatment, communicate with residents, and deploy limited resources to keep streets safe. Yet one preventable danger remains entirely within the control of individual drivers the failure to remove accumulated snow and ice from vehicle surfaces before traveling.

When snow and ice dislodge from a moving vehicle, it becomes a projectile. At highway speeds, a sheet of ice can shatter a windshield, cause a driver to swerve, or trigger a chain reaction crash. These are not unavoidable acts of nature. They are preventable hazards.

SB 698 establishes a clear duty to remove snow and ice that poses a threat before operating or towing a vehicle. It appropriately limits enforcement to secondary action, which balances roadway safety with fair policing practices. At the same time, it increases accountability when a violation contributes to property damage, serious bodily injury, or death. That is a reasonable and responsible framework.

In local government, we emphasize shared responsibility. Public works crews clear roads. Law enforcement responds to collisions. Emergency personnel stand ready. But individual drivers must also do their part. This bill reinforces a simple expectation of care for others on the road.

The graduated fine structure is proportionate. It distinguishes between commercial and noncommercial vehicles and recognizes the increased risk posed by larger vehicles. It does not criminalize conduct unnecessarily. It sets a standard of responsibility.

Road safety is not partisan. It is practical. This measure supports families, protects first responders, and reduces preventable harm.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 698.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr Cashenna A Cross

# **SafeRoadsMD Supports SB 698.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Seng

Position: FAV



**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](mailto:JSeng@SafeRoadsMD.org), [SafeRoadsMD.org](http://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

***Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.***  
2127 Regina Terrace, Clarksburg, MD 20871 (202) 468-7682

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.

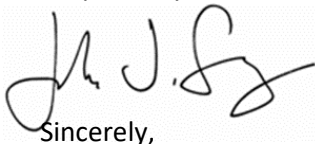
Clearing snow and ice takes only a few minutes. The injuries caused by failing to do so can last a lifetime.

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

# Letter of Support for SB0698.pdf

Uploaded by: Mike McKay

Position: FAV

**MIKE MCKAY**  
*Legislative District 1*  
Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties



*Annapolis Office*  
James Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street, Room 416  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3565  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3565  
Mike.McKay@senate.maryland.gov

Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Executive Nominations Committee

*Joint Committees*  
Administrative, Executive,  
and Legislative Review  
Children, Youth, and Families  
Program Open Space and Agricultural  
Land Preservation

**THE SENATE OF MARYLAND**  
**ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401**

*Cumberland Office*  
100N Mechanic Street  
Cumberland, Maryland 21502  
240-362-7040

*Williamsport Office*  
2N Conococheque Street  
Williamsport Town Hall  
Williamsport, Maryland

February 10, 2026

RE: Fire/EMS Coalition Support for SB0698

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee,

The Fire/EMS Coalition would like to express their support for **Senate Bill 698: Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces**. This bill will prohibit a person from operating or towing a vehicle without removing from exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated snow and ice; and prohibit a person from committing a violation of the Act that contributes to an accident resulting in property damage or the death of or serious bodily injury to another person.

The Fire/EMS Coalition supports Senate Bill 698.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'Mike McKay'.

Senator Mike McKay  
Representing the Appalachia Region of Maryland  
Serving Garrett, Allegany, and Washington Counties

**Voting Organizations:**

**Maryland Fire Chief's Association (MFCA)**  
**Maryland State Firefighter's Association (MSFA)**  
**State Fire Marshal (OSFM)**  
**Maryland Fire Rescue Institute (MFRI)**  
**Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services System (MIEMMS)**  
**Metro Fire Chief's Association**  
**Professional Firefighters of Maryland**

***Our Mission Statement***

*The Maryland Fire/EMS Coalition unites Republicans and Democrats in support of fire/emergency services legislation that benefit all first responders. Becoming a member does not require taking positions on legislation; rather Coalition members are asked to offer support in a way that best benefits fire/emergency services in their respective Legislative Districts.*

**P SB698 Snow and Ice.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mindy Badin

Position: FAV

**Please Support Senate Bill 698**  
**Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice -**  
**Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces**

March 4, 2026

To:

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

From:

Mindy Badin  
4212 Charley Forest Street  
Olney, MD 20832  
minbadoo1@yahoo.com

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

I would like to express my support of Senate Bill 698, which would prohibit operating or towing a vehicle without first removing accumulated snow and ice from exposed vehicle surfaces.

Serious injuries and deaths have occurred from snow and ice dislodging from moving vehicles. Sheets of compacted snow and ice, also known as "ice missiles", create a dangerous roadway hazard; at best they obstruct driver visibility, at worst they cause serious collisions.

Senate Bill 698, if passed into law, will prevent avoidable crashes and injuries. Clearing accumulated snow and ice is just common sense and consideration for fellow motorists.

Several other states, including New Hampshire, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and Rhode Island, have passed "ice missile" laws which require removal of snow and ice from vehicle roofs, hoods, trunks, and windows. Maryland needs to join these states in ensuring the safety of its residents.

Personally, when I have found myself driving behind a vehicle with accumulated snow and ice, I try to put space between us to avoid possible ice missiles. And I have always thought, "There should be a law against this." Now is our chance.

In Maryland, snow happens. By passing Senate Bill 698, we can take a common-sense approach to reduce roadway hazards and protect all people using our Maryland roadways.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 698.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Mindy Badin

# **SB0698 - LOS - SHA - Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accu**

Uploaded by: Nora Corasaniti

Position: FAV

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March 4, 2026

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

***RE: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 698 – Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice – Removal from Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following letter of support for the Committee’s consideration of Senate Bill 698.

SB 698 prohibits a person from operating or towing a vehicle without removing accumulated snow and ice that poses a threat to persons or property from exposed surfaces and prohibits a person from committing a violation that may contribute to a crash resulting in property damage or the injury or death of another person.

The State Highway Administration (SHA) supports the Clear Before You Drive Act as it addresses a critical public safety need on Maryland’s roadways. As we have seen in recent weeks, flying ice shattered the windshield of a sheriff deputy’s cruiser on I-97 in Anne Arundel County, and two people in Harford County were hospitalized when ice smashed through their windshield on I-95.

Additionally, snow debris from moving vehicle surfaces limits visibility for other drivers, contributing to crashes. Uncleared vehicles also significantly contribute to secondary accumulation on roadways, making it more challenging for winter maintenance crews to achieve bare pavement and resulting in dangerous localized icy areas on roadways.

These incidents pose serious threats to highway users and all Marylanders. Currently, driving with snow-covered vehicle surfaces is not explicitly illegal unless it obstructs the driver’s visibility. The Motor Vehicle Administration’s Maryland Driver’s Manual currently contains information on driving in snowy and icy conditions. Drivers are taught to ensure not only their windshield and headlights are clear, but to clear the entire vehicle of snow and ice before they begin vehicle operation on roadways. SB 698 codifies this guidance in law, improves safety for highway users, and holds motorists accountable for snow and ice accumulation on their vehicles.

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.  
Page Two

SB 698 is a common-sense measure that encourages personal responsibility and prevents avoidable roadway tragedies. For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberations and issue Senate Bill 698 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

April Moeller  
Director  
Office of Government Affairs  
Maryland State Highway Administration  
410-210-5780

Matthew Mickler  
Director  
Office of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090

# **SB0698 - LOS - SHA - Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accu**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: FAV

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March 4, 2026

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

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Maryland State Highway Administration  
410-210-5780

Matthew Mickler  
Director  
Office of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090

# **AAA Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 698 - snow and ice**

Uploaded by: Ragina Ali

Position: FAV



**AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 698  
Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice –  
Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces  
(Clear Before You Drive Act)  
Sponsor: Senator McCray**

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **supports SB 698 the “Clear Before You Drive Act.”**
- While most drivers clear their windshield and back window of snow and ice, for their own visibility, all too often, they don't clear the roof, hood and or trunk of their vehicles.
- SB 696 strives to change this dangerous behavior, by making it illegal to drive without “*making reasonable efforts to remove from exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated snow and ice.*”
- The bill holds drivers accountable whose failure to remove snow and ice contributes to a crash causing death, serious bodily injury or property damage.
- At highway speeds, even a small sheet of ice can become a dangerous projectile, shattering windshields, causing drivers to lose control, and triggering chain-reaction crashes.
- With last month's snow and ice storm in Maryland, there were at least two incidents that were reported by news outlets, where drivers and/or their passengers were injured as a result of ice falling onto their vehicles.
- In Harford County, two people were injured when their car's windshield was shattered by ice, causing the driver to lose control on the Tydings Bridge on I-95.
- In Anne Arundel County, the windshield of a deputy's police car was smashed when ice struck it, requiring the deputy to be hospitalized with minor injuries.
- AAA believes that HB 474 will reduce serious crashes caused by snow or ice becoming dislodged from motor vehicles and will save lives, protecting drivers and all road users.
- As a matter of safety, courtesy, and common sense, AAA respectfully requests a favorable report for **SB 698**.

**Contacts:**

*Ragina C. Ali, AAA Club Alliance  
Public and Government Affairs Manager  
443.465.5020*

*Marty Lostrom, GS Proctor & Associates  
Associate  
202.368.3859*

# **Testimony in support of SB0698 - Clear Before You**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

03/04/2026

Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON SB#0698 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**

**Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)**

**TO:** Chair Smith, Jr., Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard Keith Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB#0698, Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)**

Driving home from Annapolis on February 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2026 on US 70 my car windshield was almost struck by a piece of ice from the roof of a truck in front of me. It hit the road directly in front of my car.

As reported by WBAL TV *Ice flying off cars injures 3 in Maryland, prompting safety reminders*<sup>1</sup>

*Ice flying off cars injured at least three people in Maryland, including an Anne Arundel County sheriff's deputy, prompting leaders to remind drivers to clear snow and ice from their vehicles to prevent further accidents.*

*A large chunk of ice flew off another vehicle and hit a deputy's car on Interstate 97 Wednesday [January 21, 2026] morning, leaving the patrol car with a busted windshield and ice inside.*

It is incumbent on Maryland to prevent such accidents, and this bill will offer a path to doing that.

This bill meets that goal by prohibiting a person from operating or towing a vehicle without removing from exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated snow and ice; and prohibiting a person from committing a violation of the Act that contributes to an accident resulting in property damage or the death of or serious bodily injury to another person.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0698.**

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.wbaltv.com/article/officer-injured-windshield-smashed-sliding-ice-other-vehicle/70171805>

# **SB698 - Support with Amendments - Maryland Motor T**

Uploaded by: Louis Campion

Position: FWA



**HEARING DATE:** March 4, 2026

**BILL NO/TITLE:** SB698: Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)

**COMMITTEE:** Senate Judicial Proceedings

**POSITION:** **Support with Amendments**

During the winter months snow and ice accumulates on the tops of all vehicles, including cars, trucks, trailers and buses. This accumulation of snow and ice potentially causes serious safety issues. During transit ice may dislodge from a vehicle, potentially causing property damage to other vehicles and injuring other motorists.

Unlike passenger cars, there are numerous challenges with removing snow and ice from large commercial vehicles. These include:

- Worker safety – there is substantial potential for a serious workers compensation injury or death due to slippage if a driver climbs on top of a truck or trailer. This also opens up numerous OSHA concerns.
- There are a lack of options available to remove snow and ice. Maryland has thousands of trucks and trailers registered in the state, not counting the thousands of vehicles that deliver or pass through from out of state. There will never be enough drive through scrapers, truck washes, etc. to accommodate the number of commercial vehicles on the road.
- Snow rakes or brooms are not effective for ice removal. They also create a workers' compensation risk from falling debris or shoulder injuries.
- Vehicles while in transit, parked waiting to load/unload on a shipper's property, or taking a mandatory rest brake may accumulate snow and ice with no opportunity for removal. In many cases shippers (including the Port of Baltimore) do not even allow a driver to exit his truck when he is picking up or dropping off a load.

Recognizing these challenges, the sponsor of the legislation is proposing amendments that would address some of the concerns that the trucking industry has raised. These amendments incorporate language from northeastern states that have passed similar legislation by ensuring drivers are not forced to take unsafe actions that may violate other workplace safety rules, and clarifying that no driver can be cited more than once in a 24 hour period for a violation so that he has time to clear his vehicle when he returns to a terminal or parks at a rest area since he cannot do so at roadside.

The passage of this bill with the sponsor's amendments will make all drivers conscious of this safety issue, encouraging them to take steps to remove snow and ice. As such, MMTA respectfully asks for a favorable report.

**About Maryland Motor Truck Association:** Maryland Motor Truck Association is a non-profit trade association that has represented the trucking industry since 1935. In service to its 900 members, MMTA is committed to support, advocate and educate for a safe, efficient and profitable trucking industry in Maryland.

**For further information, contact:** Louis Campion, (c) 443-623-5663