

February 4, 2026

The Honorable Sandy Bartlett
Chair, Judiciary Committee
100 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 286 – Vehicle Laws – Ignition Interlock System Program – Required Participation

Dear Chair Bartlett and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 286 it removes an unnecessary barrier to ignition interlock enrollment for certain offenders.

HB 286 removes the requirement that individuals age 21 or older who violate an alcohol restriction on their driver's license have their administrative suspension altered by an Administrative Law Judge if they choose to enroll in ignition interlock in lieu of the automatic license suspension.

Under current law, the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) has the authority to offer licensed drivers under 21 who violate the alcohol restriction on their driver's license the option of either serving a suspension of their driving privileges for a specified period of time or enrolling in the ignition interlock program. However, individuals age 21 or over who violate the same restriction on their driving privileges when applicable must file a request for a hearing with the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH) and receive a favorable ruling from an Administrative Law Judge altering their suspension before the individual may enroll in ignition interlock.

This requirement for an OAH hearing causes unnecessary burdens for both the license holder and the MVA. The requirement for an OAH hearing creates a barrier to, and delays participation in, ignition interlock for the license holder while adding financial costs and administrative paperwork burdens on the MVA. The Administration must pay for the hearing with OAH and prepare and present at each hearing. Removing this barrier encourages participation in ignition interlock and treats all Marylanders the same in the process for resolving their license restriction violation regardless of age.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant House Bill 286 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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