



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

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

FROM: Chief David Morris, Co-Chair, MCPA, Joint Legislative Committee
Sheriff Darren Popkin, Co-Chair, MSA, Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 6, 2020

RE: **SB 319 – Vehicle Laws – Move Over Safety Monitoring System – Authorization**

POSITION: SUPPORT IN CONCEPT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) SUPPORT SB 319, but believe there needs to be more clarity on process and how the system operates.

SB 319 would establish a regulatory framework for the use of “move over safety monitoring systems” in the State. The primary purpose of the “move over” law is to protect from injury emergency first responders and those operating service vehicles while engaging in highway operations on our roadways. Each year, distracted drivers who fail to give their full time and attention to the roadway strike emergency and service vehicles, and their operators on both highways and roadways across the state. The frequency of these incidents continue to rise with significant costs in both property damage and injuries, some resulting in personal tragedy.

The use of speed cameras in school safety zones and work zones have proven effective at reducing speeds, modifying driving behavior and decreasing the risk of injury caused by excessive speed. Likewise, use of camera technology on school buses has proven successful at identifying and holding accountable those violators who pass school buses while loading/unloading students. SB 319 capitalizes on the use of this technology to aide enforcement of move over laws, reducing property damage and personal injuries on our highways.

While MCPA and MSA support this legislation and the use of this technology conceptually, there needs to be further discussion on system operations and enforcement. For example, should a driver be required to slow down by a pre-determined speed versus a speed that is greater than reasonable and prudent. The bill allows for the use of a photograph which can record the speed and the distance between the passing motorist and the public safety vehicle stopped on the roadway shoulder. Similar to the current automated speed enforcement statute which captures violations exceeding certain limits, parameters and thresholds related to reasonable speed and distance should be considered in this context.

MCPA and MSA offers to work with the Committee on these issues and others that may arise during discussions.