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Judicial Proceedings Committee

Chair

Joint Committee on Ending
Homelessness

Chair

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
SB 566 -- Vehicle Laws – Registration Renewal – Inspection Requirement**

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher and Committee Members:

SB566 protects the life and property of both the operator of a vehicle and that of the general public who are impacted by accidents involving vehicle equipment defects. The bill does this by establishing a recurrent safety inspection requirement.

Maryland currently has no continuing vehicle safety inspection law. The current statute requires the inspections of vehicles only during the sale and transfer of that vehicle; and no time after. This bill would require a bi-annual abbreviated vehicle safety inspection as a pre-requisite for re-registration. The inspection would be limited to nine (9) items, as outlined in the bill that we believe are critical to basic vehicle safety.

By establishing this requirement, **SB566** addresses issues regarding vehicle safety and negligence resulting from faulty equipment and aligns Maryland with other states that have already established these inspections. We must take measures to prevent or at least mitigate these results. Regular vehicle inspections provide a path with assisting in the reduction.

All of our neighboring states require vehicle safety inspections as a prerequisite of re-registration - **Delaware, Virginia, Pennsylvania, New York, and West Virginia**. Other states include Alabama, Texas, Hawaii, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Missouri, New Hampshire, North Carolina, Rhode Island, Utah, and Vermont. In fact, **most of these states require an annual inspection**, with the exception of *Rhode Island, Louisiana, and Missouri* which all have bi-annual inspections.

Maryland State Police (MSP) reported that from 2017-2019 roughly 348,600 accidents; of those 10,127 were directly related to vehicle equipment defects. Although that may seem like a small number in comparison to overall accident totals, that number reflects that accidents in which equipment defects were a contributor account for 2.9% of all accidents in our state. These accidents result in deaths, injuries, and property damage – all of which we have an opportunity to help prevent.

Comparatively we discovered the number of crimes resulting in death, injuries and property damage over the past 3 years totaled 166,712, of 6.043 million people, or 2.7%.

Maryland must take measures to prevent or at least mitigate these accidents. Regular vehicle inspections can help with this mitigation and reduce the number of accidents involving vehicle equipment defects. Today, you'll also be hearing testimony from Julie Drizin on the devastating impact that these kinds of accidents have on and why inspections are so important to increasing safety.

Every effort to increase vehicle safety, and preserve both life and property, is an effort in the right direction. For these reasons, I urge your support for SB566.

Thank you for your time and your consideration.

In Partnership,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Mary Washington". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "M" and a long, sweeping underline.

Senator Mary Washington