



**Support Testimony of  
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SB 819 Distracted Driving Monitoring Systems Authorization  
Sponsor: Senator Klausmeier  
February 27, 2020  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
William C. Smith, Jr.-Chair**

Good afternoon Senator Smith and Respected Committee Members,

I am Dr. Laura Buchanan, Assistant Professor of Surgery, University of Maryland School of Medicine and a Trauma/Critical Care Surgeon at the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center. I am before you today in support of SB 819 Distracted Driving Monitoring Systems Authorization, which would allow Maryland State Police and counties to establish a program to enforce distracted driving violations. It is not mandatory, it simply enables a county the option of implementing technology that would reduce distracted driving and motor vehicle crashes in Maryland.

As established by State law, the R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center is the core element of the State's Emergency Medical Services System and serves as the State's Primary Adult Resource Center (PARC) for the treatment of trauma. Specifically, the law mandates Shock Trauma to serve as (a) the State's primary adult trauma center, (b) the statewide referral center for the treatment of head, spinal and multiple trauma injuries, (c) the regional trauma center for Region III and the southwest quadrant of Baltimore City, and (d) the statewide referral center for patients in need of hyperbaric medical treatment.

The R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center is the State's only trauma hospital. It serves as a vital statewide clinical resource and uniquely maintains an around-the-clock state of readiness in its dedicated trauma resuscitation unit (TRU), operating rooms and recovery rooms. Our facility and staff are organized for on-demand access and treatment of the State's most critically ill and injured patients to a degree unparalleled anywhere in the system. The MIEMSS PARC designation represents the State's highest level of capability and readiness.

Every day, at Shock Trauma, I care for patients who were in a motor vehicle related crash due to a distracted driving. I see severely injured teens and adults of all ages. These crashes often lead to devastating and life altering injuries or fatalities.

I have dedicated my career to saving Maryland's most severely injured individuals but I am also passionate about preventing these injuries.

Further statistics



## R ADAMS COWLEY SHOCK TRAUMA CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

- In 2018 Maryland had 512 Fatalities from crashes, 34,658, crashes resulting in injury, and 117,955 total crashes. (Maryland Department of Transportation, Motor Vehicle Administration, Highway Safety Office)
- In 2019, R Adams Cowley Shock Trauma Center admitted 7,060 patients into their bays and 36% of those patients were from motor vehicle crashes which translates to roughly 2,500 people. (Shock Trauma Fact Sheet, 2019)
- Distracted driving contributes to 58% of all crashes in Maryland (NHTSA, 2018)
- Texting while driving is categorized under three forms of distractions: visual, manual, and cognitive. (NHTSA, 2018)
- Visual distractions require the driver to remove focus from the road momentarily. Manual distractions require the driver to eliminate physical contact from the steering wheel. Cognitive distraction occurs when the driver has diverted their attention away from driving. (NHTSA, 2018)

For these reasons I urge your support for SB 819. While we at Shock Trauma love what we do, we would get more joy, from being unneeded. We support this reduction in preventable injuries and fatalities. I am happy to answer any questions.

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### References

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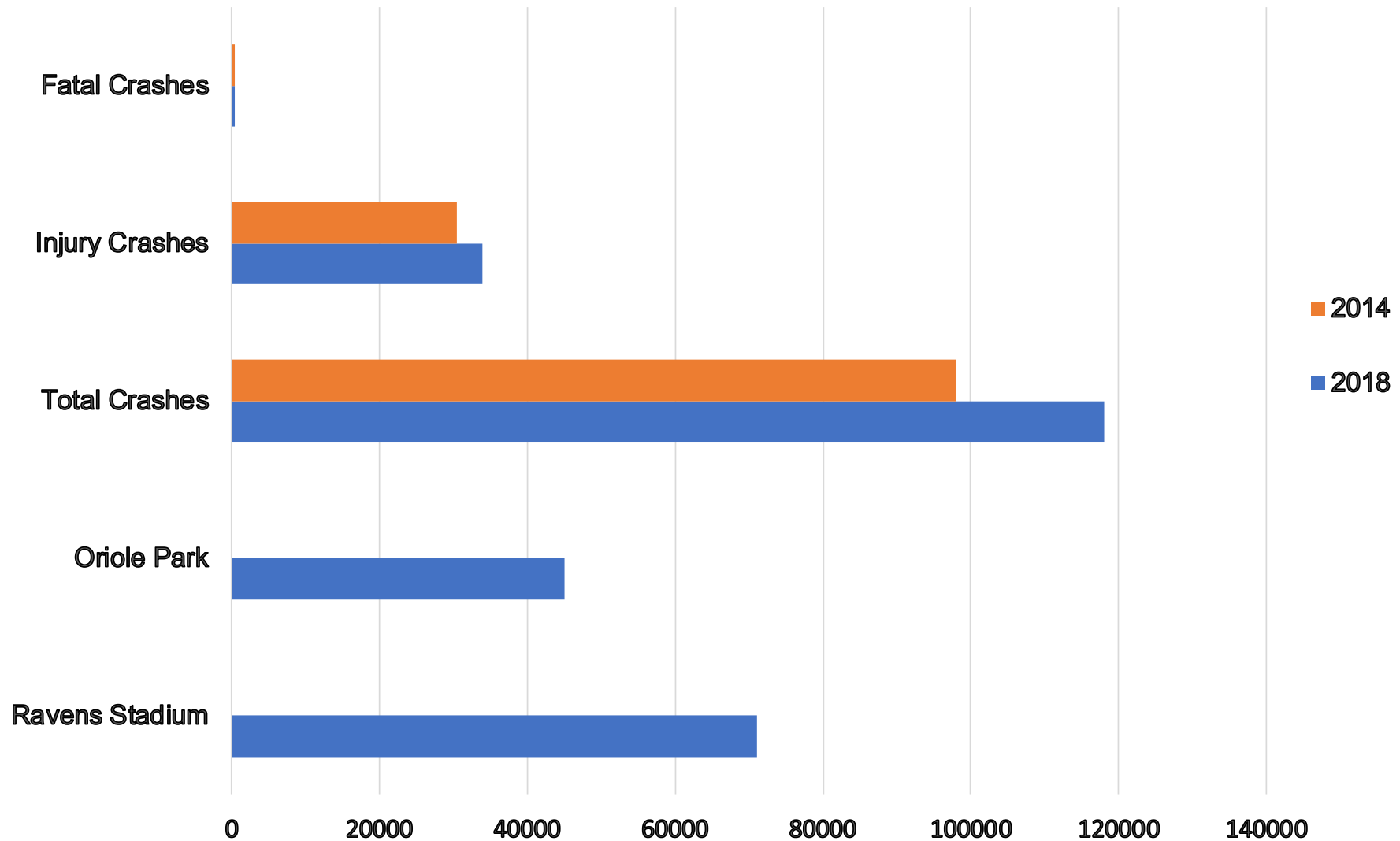
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## Maryland Crash Summary 2014 vs 2018



### Our Values

Respect and Integrity | Teamwork and Collaboration | Excellence and Innovation | Diversity and Inclusion

Source:  
Maryland Department of Transportation,  
Highway Safety Office

# Our Numbers

2,500

58%



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