

HB - 352

CRASH

10 Whaler Lane

Berlin, MD 21811

February 12, 2020

Statement of Support for HB 352 - Criminal Negligence-Life Threatening Injuries Involving a Vehicle or Vessel

I serve as chairman of a public highway safety community organization called CRASH-County Resident Action for Safer Highways. I, along with several local Worcester County residents, mobilized this group after 47 people died in 41 crashes on Route 113 between 1980 to 1999.

The efforts of our organization, CRASH, resulted in a commitment from county and state officials to support and secure funding for the widening and dualization of Route 113 in Worcester County, Maryland from the Delaware state line to the Virginia state line. A total segment of 38 miles to upgrading and widening Route 113 reached near completion with 34 miles finished in 2019.

On behalf of CRASH, I appreciate having this opportunity to support House Bill 352, legislation that would prohibit a person from causing a life-threatening injury to another by motor vehicle or vessel as a result of driving, operating, or controlling a motor vehicle or vessel in a criminally negligent manner. The legislation would establish the offense of a life-threatening injury by motor vehicle or vessel as criminal negligence. A violator is guilty of a misdemeanor and on conviction is subject to a maximum of 18 months imprisonment and/or a \$5,000 fine.

House Bill 352 is a commonsense bill that addresses a gap in current law when it comes to charging individuals who cause life-threatening injuries by a vehicle in a criminally negligent manner. Current law provides that manslaughter by vehicle or vessel through criminal negligence is a misdemeanor and subject to a maximum of three years imprisonment and/ or a \$5,000 fine. However, when life-threatening injuries by a vehicle are sustained, the penalty is only a \$500 fine. Senator Carozza's legislation brings a more just penalty to those convicted of causing life threatening injuries with a vehicle.

I believe this legislation would serve as a deterrent to this type of criminally negligent driving and would promote public safety on our Maryland roads.

Sincerely,

Robert G. Hulburd