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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 291 – Vehicle Laws – Failure to Pay Video Toll – Outstanding Fines

January 21, 2021

Delegate Carol L. Krimm

WHAT DOES THIS BILL PROPOSE?

HB 291 reduces the outstanding civil penalty set by the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) from \$50 to \$25 for toll violations that were assessed on or before July 1, 2021.

WHY IS THIS BILL NECESSARY?

The Maryland Department of Legislative Services provided data on the number of civil penalties billed and penalties outstanding from FY2016 through November of FY2020 (see attached). Nearly one in three motorists in FY2016 failed to pay their tolls; climbing to one in two as of November 23, 2020. As Maryland cashless toll system continues to grow; we have to ensure the punishment fits the crime when assessing civil penalties for toll violations.

In 2018, the General Assembly passed legislation for a revised tiered civil penalty structure from the current \$50 penalty to: \$25 for the first five simultaneous toll violations triggering a \$50 penalty thereafter beginning in the second quarter of FY2021. In the future motorists will be offered relief for their toll violations; HB 291 retroactively aids those already struggling with outstanding civil penalty fines.

Many Maryland families are struggling financially during the pandemic. An outstanding fine may adversely affect credit ratings and peace of mind. Reducing these fines may allow families to pay their debt or present an opportunity to gradually pay off a debt that no longer is insurmountable.

I urge you to support HB 291.

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Civil Penalties

As of November 23, 2020

	# of Civil Penalties Billed	# of Civil Penalties Outstanding
FY2016	1,279,819	437,876
FY2017	1,126,831	468,114
FY2018	919,436	419,612
FY2019	923,583	510,523
FY2020*	584,139	386,360
FY2021*	0	0

** FY 2020 civil penalties are through March 16, 2020. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and to assist and provide financial relief to customers, the MDTA temporarily paused the processing and mailing Notices of Toll Due (NOTDs) on March 17, 2020. The processing and mailing of NOTDs resumed in mid-October, beginning with unpaid transactions for trips made from March through June 2020. In accordance with State law, a vehicle owner has 45 days from the date the notice is mailed to pay the video toll amount due without any penalty. To date, no civil penalties have been assessed for NOTDs issued on or after March 17, 2020.*