



Larry Hogan
Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor
Gregory Slater
Secretary

February 16, 2021

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chairman, Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 553 – Vehicle Laws – Intersections – Prohibited Acts

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 553 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 553 prohibits drivers from entering the intersection of a green or yellow signal if the vehicle cannot completely clear the intersection. Enforcement of the bill's provisions are contingent on signs being installed at an intersection, in accordance with standards specified in the Maryland Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices.

When a driver decides to enter an intersection without the ability to fully clear the intersection, it impedes the movements of other road users, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and other motor vehicles. These unexpected conditions – blocked crosswalks and bike lanes – force pedestrians and bicyclists to make unpredictable movements to navigate the intersection, resulting in unsafe conditions and potential accidents and collisions.

Senate Bill 553 aims to improve pedestrian safety by reducing the likelihood of pedestrian crashes. Additionally, clarifying language enables law enforcement officials to enforce existing traffic laws concerning intersection movements.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates Senate Bill 553.

Sincerely,

Mitch Baldwin
State Legislative Manager
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-310-1056

Melissa Einhorn
State Legislative Officer
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1102