



MARYLAND COALITION FOR HIGHWAY SAFETY

Testimony to Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee

HB 102 - SUPPORT

January 18, 2022

John J. Seng, Director
Maryland Coalition For Highway Safety
JohnJSeng@gmail.com (202) 468-7682
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/marylandcoalitionhighwaysafety>

Delegate Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: Please SUPPORT HB 102 “Vehicle Laws – Race and Speed Contests – Penalties” House Environment and Transportation Committee Hearing Date: 20 January 2022

Dear Chairman Barve and Members of the Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee:

My name is John Seng, volunteer director and founder of the *Maryland Coalition For Highway Safety*.

Our 125-member organization supports all provisions of HB 102, sponsored by Delegate Mary Lehman.

The Maryland Coalition For Highway Safety’s founding organizations include the *American Automobile Association (AAA) Mid-Atlantic*, the *Greater Olney Civic Association*, *The Route 210 Traffic Safety Committee*, *The Tantallon Citizens Association* in Prince George’s County and a group of Maryland home owner associations.

The Problem

Our members have grown increasingly concerned about the safety of our Maryland roads, whether highways, local major roads or neighborhood streets.

All manner of road violence lays in wait for innocent people merely seeking to cross a road, ride their bikes or commute from point A to point B. Why should your constituents – ourselves, our family members and our friends face a risk of dying on our roads just to live their lives?

Most disturbingly, too many people consider Maryland roads as their personal, private raceway, with total disregard to public safety and the quality of life for the overwhelming majority of your constituents.

It all comes down to **deterrence** via peer pressure, via education and most importantly, via increased enforcement of current laws that will hopefully carry increased sanctions against unbridled aggression on Maryland roads.

We believe HB 102 sponsored by Del. Mary Lehman takes a major step in the right direction in sending the message that risking the lives of others in your pursuit of what some people consider “fun” carries a higher price than ever.

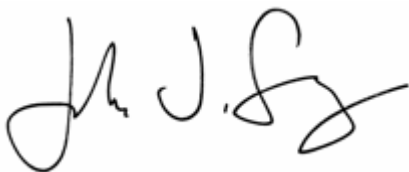
Make Road Violence Perpetrators Tell It To The Judge!

In particular, we emphasize that the “must appear” provision in this bill adds a significant, critical deterrence for individuals who could otherwise still easily, instantly pay even higher penalties, but continue to speed or race in total disregard for public safety and wellbeing. Maryland courts may already be busy, Mr. Barve, but **we believe that the wheels of justice turning at any speed is worth saving even one life**. Stronger deterrents written into law should ultimately lower the burden on our courts. Also, decision-makers should seek other remedies to alleviate congestion in the legal system. In the meantime, let the specter of a court appearance hang over the heads of drivers who simply pay their fines but selfishly continue their lack of respect for road safety and your constituents.

Putting more teeth into current laws offers a major step in the right direction. **The passage of HB 102 presents real potential to save lives in Maryland.**

We thank you and the Committee for your review of our concerns. We urge you to submit a favorable report on HB 102.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Seng". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter of each name being significantly larger and more stylized.

John J. Seng
Director

CC: Delegate Mary Lehman, Maryland Coalition For Highway Safety members