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HB 404 Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits – Establishment
FAVORABLE
House Environment and Transportation
February 10, 2022

Good afternoon Chair Barve and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee. I am Tammy Bresnahan, Director of Advocacy for AARP Maryland. AARP is the largest membership organization in Maryland representing those who are 50 and over. AARP Maryland has over 850,000 members. AARP Maryland supports HB 404 and we thank Delegate Lehman for sponsoring this important legislation.

HB 404 allows all Maryland jurisdictions and Baltimore City to lower driving speeds to 15 miles per hour. Currently the only jurisdiction allowed to lower driving speeds to 15 miles per hour is Montgomery County. Additionally, HB 404 requires that driving speeds can only be changed after performing an engineering and traffic investigation and is subject to restrictions on the use of speed monitoring systems.

AARP Maryland believes every jurisdiction and Baltimore City should have the ability to change driving speeds. Everyone should feel safe crossing a street. But the streets can be dangerous, especially for older Americans. The number of pedestrians killed by vehicles rose 35 percent in the past decade — and the death rate is almost twice as high for people over 75 as for the general population.¹ Making streets safe has been an important issue for AARP. AARP Maryland advocates for everyone, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities to have Safe Streets.

Walking and bicycling promote physical and mental health for all ages. Walking is the second most popular means of getting around (after driving). Many communities are not designed to promote walking and bicycling. Residential areas are often far from commercial facilities. Sidewalks are often nonexistent or in poor condition. Crosswalk signals are often not timed for the slower pace of older pedestrians. Unsafe conditions for pedestrians are most pronounced in lower-income communities and communities of color, Older adults are also overrepresented in deaths involving people walking.

Communities are increasingly seeking to address road safety. AARP Maryland believes states should adopt and fully implement complete streets/safe streets policies to enable safe access for

¹ [Streets Safer for Pedestrians](#)

users of all ages and abilities. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transit users.

AARP Maryland respectfully asks the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 494. If you have follow up questions please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@arp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.