



Larry Hogan
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Lt. Governor
James F. Ports, Jr.
Secretary

March 3, 2022

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 1025 – Vehicle Laws – Driver Education – Self-Paced,
Online Instruction**

Dear Chairman Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1025 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

House Bill 1025 would allow certain individuals to complete a driver's education course via a self-paced, online format. This online-only format would be available to individuals who are at least 18 years old and hold a high school diploma or are at least 19 years old. The self-paced, online course would require 30 hours of classroom-based instruction and at least six hours of highway driving instruction.

The MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration (MDOT MVA) is responsible for developing the curriculum taught in driver's education courses and oversees the approximately 373 driver education schools throughout Maryland that offer these courses. While the MDOT MVA offers online remote learning, this format is required to have active classroom participation with a live instructor, similar to the instruction provided by an in-person classroom.

Any online-only curriculum would require developing a new curriculum to ensure the proper individual is taking the course, and is fully engaged at all times, including during the necessary educational quizzes. Additionally, the MDOT MVA would need the ability to audit this new format, similar to how the in-person classroom environment is audited. Further, students will still need to arrange for behind the wheel instruction with an instructor.

While emerging technologies are becoming available for online instruction and there has been discussion on these developments, there is yet to be a consensus on how to proceed. The MDOT MVA believes a study of these new technologies and how they can be adapted to driver education courses would be beneficial prior to moving forward with the alternative education mediums established by House Bill 1025.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1025.

Respectfully submitted,

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