

# **HB 404\_FAV\_MML.pdf**

Uploaded by: Bill Jorch

Position: FAV



## Maryland Municipal League

*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

# TESTIMONY

February 10, 2022

**Committee:** House Environment and Transportation

**Bill:** HB 404 - Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits - Establishment

**Position:** Support

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League supports House Bill 404, which authorizes municipalities to lower the speed limit on a highway to 15 miles per hour (MPH) after completion of an engineering and traffic study.

Currently, only Montgomery County and municipalities in Montgomery County are authorized to lower speed limits on highways to 15 MPH after completion of a traffic study, and this bill would expand that authority to municipalities statewide. With the proliferation of GPS navigation apps, drivers are using roads that were not designed to handle such vehicular volume. As a result, speeding is a problem in many municipalities, and this bill would give local officials one more tool to combat this type of reckless driving behavior. As such, the League respectfully requests that this committee provide HB 404 with a favorable report.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:**

Scott A. Hancock	Executive Director
Angelica Bailey	Director, Government Relations
Bill Jorch	Director, Research and Policy Analysis
Justin Fiore	Manager, Government Relations

1212 West Street, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

410-268-5514 | 800-492-7121 | FAX: 410-268-7004 | [www.md-municipal.org](http://www.md-municipal.org)

**HB0404-ET\_MACo\_SUP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: FAV



**MARYLAND**  
*Association of*  
**COUNTIES**

## **House Bill 404**

### *Vehicle Laws – Speed Limits – Establishment*

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

Date: February 10, 2022

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 404. The bill grants local governments the ability to decrease speeds to 15 miles per hour on highways following an engineering and traffic investigation.

Counties handle a wide range of road safety and maintenance responsibilities. These responsibilities include building and maintaining roads, distributing de-icing agents before a storm, plowing, speed enforcement, responding to accidents, planning and zoning approvals, etc. Establishing speed limits is already a local responsibility, governed by best practices, but the current state law limits the lower bounds of that local authority to 25 miles per hour, other than in Montgomery County and its municipalities.

This bill recognizes a reasonable process for communities to recognize specific instances where the 25-mile-per-hour standard may not fully preserve driver or pedestrian safety, and to act locally to remedy them. Such decisions would remain subject to an appropriate study and local accountability.

HB 404 represents another practical and reasonable tool for counties to protect our streets and mutual constituents. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to give HB 404 a **FAVORABLE** report.

**BikeAAASupportHB404-20220207.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jon Korin

Position: FAV



# *Support HB404 Speed Limits*

*Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County*  
P.O. Box 208, Arnold, MD 21012 [www.bikeaaa.org](http://www.bikeaaa.org)

House Environment & Transportation Committee  
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

February 7, 2022

RE: SUPPORT House Bill 404

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of District 33, president of Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (“BikeAAA”), Chair of the Anne Arundel County Bicycle Advisory Commission, Member of the 2017 Maryland Bicycle Safety Task Force and avid Maryland cyclist for over 20 years. On behalf of BikeAAA and it’s more than 1,000 members, we support HB404. This bill will empower local jurisdictions to assess and reduce speed limits. This is especially important for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, the elderly, people with disabilities and schoolchildren who may cross or travel along our roads to access schools, parks, shopping areas and other destinations. Local jurisdictions are most aware of the use and context of local roads and should have the authority to reduce speed limits to increase safety. This bill also aligns with Maryland’s commitment to Vision Zero and the increasing adoption of Vision Zero by Maryland counties. Anne Arundel County is in the process of adopting Vision Zero.

Speed reduction reduces both the likelihood of a crash and also the severity of injury if a crash occurs. Please support HB404 to improve safety, especially for our most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

Jon Korin  
President, Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County  
Tel: 443-685-4103

**HB404 LEHMAN TESTIMONY.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 404 – VEHICLE LAWS – SPEED LIMITS – ESTABLISHMENT**

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIR BARVE, MR. VICE CHAIR STEIN AND COLLEAGUES. I AM ASKING YOUR FAVORABLE REPORT FOR HB 404, A BILL THAT AUTHORIZES LOCAL GOVERNMENT TO LOWER THE MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT TO 15 MILES PER HOUR AFTER PERFORMING AN ENGINEERING/TRAFFIC STUDY. PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES ARE A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN MARYLAND. THE FASTER CARS TRAVEL, THE GREATER THE CHANCE FOR SERIOUS AND FATAL INJURIES TO PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLISTS, PASSENGERS, AND DRIVERS. THE GOAL OF HB 404 IS TO REDUCE THESE INJURIES AND MAKE MARYLAND ROADS SAFER BY GIVING LOCAL JURISDICTIONS THE AUTHORITY TO LOWER SPEED LIMITS WHERE IT WARRANTED.

THIS LEGISLATION IS THE STATEWIDE VERSION OF CH689 (2021 HB562), A LOCAL BILL SPONSORED BY THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DELEGATION THAT PASSED IN 2021. CH689 AUTHORIZES MONTGOMERY COUNTY AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES TO DECREASE HIGHWAY SPEED LIMITS TO NOT LESS THAN 15 MILES PER HOUR AFTER CONDUCTING AN ENGINEERING AND TRAFFIC INVESTIGATION. IT ALSO PROHIBITS MONTGOMERY COUNTY LOCAL AUTHORITIES FROM IMPLEMENTING A NEW SPEED MONITORING SYSTEM, (i.e, SPEED CAMERAS) WHERE THE SPEED LIMIT HAS BEEN REDUCED PURSUANT TO THE BILL'S AUTHORIZATION.



PEDESTRIAN ADVOCATES ARGUED THAT SINCE MONTGOMERY COUNTY IS NOW AUTHORIZED TO LOWER ITS SPEED LIMIT TO 15 MILES PER HOUR, OTHER COUNTIES AND BALTIMORE CITY SHOULD HAVE THE SAME OPTION. THIS BILL PROVIDES THAT OPTION BY ENABLING LOCAL AUTHORITIES ACROSS THE STATE TO IMPLEMENT THE LAW IF, AFTER AN ENGINEERING/TRAFFIC STUDY, IT IS DETERMINED TO BE THE BEST INTEREST OF THEIR COMMUNITY. ADDITIONALLY, THE MANDATED TRAFFIC STUDY PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS' INPUT AND CONCERNS TO BE VOICED.

I HAVE SUBMITTED AN AMENDMENT TO CLARIFY AN ISSUE REGARDING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW SPEED MONITORING SYSTEM IN AREAS WHERE THE SPEED LIMIT HAD BEEN REDUCED. IT WAS ALWAYS OUR INTENT TO LIMIT THIS RESTRICTION TO AREAS WHERE THE SPEED LIMIT HAD BEEN DECREASED TO "LESS THAN 25 MILES PER HOUR". HB 404 WAS NOT INTENDED TO RESTRICT LOCAL JURISDICTIONS FROM INSTALLING SPEED CAMERAS ON A HIGHWAY SIMPLY BECAUSE THE SPEED LIMIT HAD BEEN DECREASED FROM 55 TO 45 MILES PER HOUR. THE AMENDMENT REMOVES ANY AMBIGUITY AROUND SPEED CAMERA PLACEMENT.

IT'S PROBABLY SAFE TO SAY THAT MOST CONSTITUENTS DON'T LIKE OR WANT MORE SPEED CAMERAS. HOWEVER, SINCE SPEED CAMERAS HAVE BEEN EFFECTIVE IN FORCING PEDESTRIANS TO OBEY THE LAW, LOCAL AUTHORITIES SHOULD BE ALLOWED TO DETERMINE HOW TO BEST MANAGE TRAFFIC, SAFETY, AND SPEED-RELATED ISSUES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES.

AS PREVIOUSLY STATED, THE INTENT OF THIS BILL IS TO PROVIDE GREATER SAFETY FOR PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLISTS, DRIVERS, AND THEIR PASSENGERS ACROSS THE STATE. ROAD RAGE AND OTHER FORMS OF RECKLESS DRIVING HAVE INCREASED IN RECENT YEARS. HB 404 WILL GIVE LOCAL JURISDICTIONS THE AUTHORITY TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF TRAFFIC, SAFETY AND SPEED LIMIT ISSUES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND ULTIMATELY SAVE LIVES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION. I URGE A FAVORABLE REPORT.

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# **HB 404 Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits – Establishment**

Uploaded by: Tammy Bresnahan

Position: FAV



One Park Place | Suite 475 | Annapolis, MD 21401-3475  
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-837-0269  
aarp.org/md | md@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpmd  
facebook.com/aarpmd

**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.<sup>1</sup> 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

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<sup>1</sup> [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](mailto:tbresnahan@arp.org) or by calling 410-302-8451.

# **HB 404 - Position Statement.pdf**

Uploaded by: Caleen Kufera

Position: FWA



## **POSITION STATEMENT**

**Bill:** HB 404 – Vehicle Laws – Speed Limits – Establishment  
**Position:** Favorable with Amendment      **Date:** February 10, 2022  
**Contact:** Caleen Kufera, Assistant General Counsel  
Adrian Gardner, General Counsel

### **What The Bill Does:**

This bill authorizes all Local Authorities to reduce the maximum speed limit on roadways within their control, after completing an engineering and traffic investigation. The bill also prohibits Local Authorities from implementing a new speed monitoring system on any portion of the road where the speed was decreased.

### **Why We Support with Amendment:**

In keeping with the Zero Deaths and Vision Zero programs, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (“Commission”) supports the passage of HB 404 *with amendment*. The Commission is charged with land use planning, parks, and recreation in Montgomery County and Prince George’s County. The agency improves the well-being of over two million residents and countless visitors within the region by: planning for the coordinated and harmonious physical growth and development of the region; protecting and stewarding natural, cultural, and historical resources; providing award winning system of parks; creating recreational experiences that enhance quality of life of all individuals; and planning great communities that are vibrant, livable, accessible and sustainable.

As a part of its mission, the Commission is committed to prioritizing the safety of adults and children whether walking, biking, or driving. The amendment put forward by the Commission, clearly establishes its authority to review and alter the speed limits on its roadways in accordance with the provisions of §21-803 of the Transportation Article.

For these reasons, the Commission accordingly urges a favorable report of HB 404 with amendment.

**# # #**

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**Office of the General Counsel**  
221 Prince George Street, First Floor, Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410.263.1930 tel.

6611 Kenilworth Avenue, Suite 200, Riverdale, Maryland 20737  
301.454.1670 tel.

**CSG HB0404\_2-10-22.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cheryl Cort

Position: FWA



February 10, 2022

Delegate Kumar Barve, Chair  
Committee on Transportation and Environment  
Maryland Housing of Delegates

Position: Support with amendments for HB 0404 - Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits – Establishment

Amendments:

Page 2, Line 18, 19 & 20, strike:

~~“(H) A local authority may not implement a new speed monitoring system to enforce speed limits on any portion of a highway for which the speed limit has been decreased under this paragraph.”~~

Regarding Amendment No. 2 by Delegate Lehman: strike “decreased” insert “TO LESS THAN 25 MILES PER HOUR,” we support this amendment as far as it goes, but recommend changing to: TO LESS THAN 15 MILES PER HOUR.

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading non-profit organization in the D.C. region, including suburban Maryland, advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We would like to express our support for House Bill 0404, with amendments. We agree with the bill’s intention to give local authorities the option to evaluate and lower speed limits on highways. Highways have a diversity of users, including people walking, biking, pushing strollers, using a wheelchair, and driving cars and trucks. The design speed and the posted speed limit are often too high, and do not sufficiently accommodate the safety and access needs of different users. Driving vehicles at high speeds is a grave danger to people. Collisions often result in severe injury and death. In fact, recent years have been the deadliest for people walking in decades. According to [Dangerous by Design](#), “the four most recent years on record (2016-2019) are the most deadly years for pedestrian deaths since 1990.”

This bill enables local authorities to change the speed limit to a more appropriate vehicle speed to better balance the needs of different users of a highway in a community. Posted speed limits, along with clear signage, enforcement and other deterrence measures, and most importantly, redesigning a roadway for lower speeds, are all tools to ensure safe use of Maryland’s public rights of way.

## Amendments

We are concerned about the bill's original blanket prohibition on the use of a new speed monitoring system to enforce a newly posted speed, even when it is validated by an engineering study. While we support Delegate Lehman's proposed Amendment No. 2, as far as it goes, we are still concerned it weakens local authorities' ability to enforce speed limits in order to address safety goals in their communities. In particular, we are concerned about the impact that limitations on enforcement could have on safety in school zones, near parks and playgrounds, libraries and main streets. If a new school zone has a posted speed limit for 15 or 20 MPH, this bill would prohibit the local authority from using a new speed monitoring system to enforce the speed limit. This would be despite the results of a study validating a speed set below 25 MPH. If a school zone is experiencing a pattern of unsafe and high speeds by motorists, the local authority should have the tools it deems appropriate to bring driver behavior into compliance with the posted legal speed limit. Without effective enforcement, speed limits are too often ignored, even in school zones.

We ask that the state not limit local authorities' ability to improve compliance with their speed limits. We need many tools to operate safe highways. Evaluation, engineering, education, and equitable enforcement are all needed to ensure our highways can be used safely by all users. Speed enforcement measures should be located and operated wherever there is an identified need to regulate speed and ensure compliance.

Barring the use of a new speed monitoring system is contrary with the intent of this bill to ensure safer operations of highways. We ask the committee to give a favorable report to this bill with the amendment we have proposed.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cort  
Policy Director

**HB404\_MDSierraClub\_fwa - 10Feb2022.pdf**

Uploaded by: Josh Tulkin

Position: FWA



P.O. Box 278  
Riverdale, MD 20738

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**  
**Testimony on: HB 404 – “Vehicle Laws – Speed Limits – Establishment”**  
**Position: Favorable with Amendment**  
**Hearing Date: February 10, 2022**

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB 404, which would authorize local authorities statewide to decrease the maximum speed limit to a reasonable and safe level on highways if engineering and traffic investigation justify such a decrease. Currently the lowest speed limit allowed on many highways is 25 miles per hour except in school zones during school hours.

We live in a car-centric culture where transportation planning, road infrastructure, and vehicle laws are largely focused on enabling vehicles to get to their destination as swiftly as possible. Unfortunately, this has resulted in some drivers feeling they have priority on the road, and there are high rates of injury and death for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicle drivers and passengers. Research shows that a vehicle’s rate of speed has a direct impact on the ability to see ahead and notice people in or near the roadway, how quickly one can respond to avoid potential problems, how long it takes to stop a vehicle, and how likely someone will die or be seriously injured as a result of a collision.

Transportation is now the primary contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in our state. Tailpipe emissions from cars and trucks are also a major source of health-damaging air pollution. For these reasons, there is an urgent need to get individuals out of their cars and taking public transit, riding bikes, and walking more. However, these activities are not as safe as they should be when vehicles are traveling too fast in densely populated areas, in shopping districts, where roads are narrow, or where there is not a clear line of vision.

Lowering speed limits is a key component of “Vision Zero,” a program the state and many localities have adopted to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries for all road users. Other components of Vision Zero include having adequate sidewalks, bikeways and crosswalks, allowing sufficient time to cross streets, narrowing lanes, and adding other traffic calming measures. However, even if most of the elements of Vision Zero just mentioned are implemented, it is doubtful that the program can succeed unless the speed limit can be lowered where appropriate, as this bill would allow.

The amendment we propose would eliminate the restriction (on page 2, lines 18 to 20) that prohibits a local authority from implementing a new speed monitoring system to enforce speed limits on any portion of a highway for which the speed limit has been decreased. Speed monitoring systems encourage drivers to obey speed limits. The restriction runs counter to the purpose of this bill – to make our roads safer for everyone, including bicyclists, pedestrians, and drivers.

In summary, this bill makes sense for our residents and our environment. We urge the committee to accept the amendment we propose and to issue a favorable report on the bill as amended.

Brian Ditzler  
Transportation Chair  
[Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org](mailto:Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org)

Josh Tulkin  
Chapter Director  
[Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org](mailto:Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org)

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

# **MD HB 404 - Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits - Establis**

Uploaded by: Peter Gray

Position: FWA



Environment and Transportation Committee  
Kumar Barve, Chair  
Dana Stein, Vice-Chair

Room 251  
House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 404 - Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits - Establishment

February 10, 2022

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Peter Gray and I represent the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. I am speaking on behalf of the 2000+ WABA members and several thousands of other supporters who live in Maryland.

WABA supports the passage of HB 404 and its enabling of all jurisdictions to lower speed limits on State Highways under certain conditions. Lowering speeds on roads is an essential element of reducing the incidence of crashes and the resultant fatalities and serious injuries stemming from such crashes. Furthermore, lower speeds in turn lessen the severity of injuries due to crashes.

WABA also urges the Committee to consider changes to the language in section (a) (4) (II) prohibiting implementation of new speed monitoring systems, to allow for such automated enforcement. Automated enforcement is proven to be an effective mechanism to get cars to significantly lower their speeds, with the benefits mentioned above.

Overall, allowing local jurisdictions to lower speed limits on State Highways will give those localities an additional tool to reach Vision Zero goals by changing the conditions of the road, and will reduce crashes and the severity of injuries from those crashes.