



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 105

Vehicle Laws - Failure to Pay Video Toll - Penalties

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

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Submitted by Julia Gross and Kali Schumitz, Co-Chairs

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Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) strongly supports SB 105, which repeals the requirement that the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA), under certain circumstances, can suspend the registration of a motor vehicle that incurs certain toll violations.

Currently, the MVA has authority to suspend vehicle registrations for toll violations. This practice has a detrimental effect on people's ability to get to work and weakens vulnerable populations connection to the workforce. Disruptions in employment often stems from disruptions in reliable transportation. This will cause low-income individuals to experience various negative outcomes.

Currently, there is a \$50 civil penalty that is applied to each transaction if it is not paid within a certain time frame. Then, the balance is moved to Maryland's Central Collection Unit (CCU). Once it is moved, there is a 17% fee added to the total amount. There must be an initial down payment made before monthly payments can start. This system makes it difficult for many low-income drivers to pay their debts and leads them to be more at risk for their vehicles registration to be suspended.

Cashless toll roads create this problem, because drivers do not have the option to pay the toll during their trip. This can lead to driver accruing extremely high cost very quickly. Drivers can enter into this situation in multiple ways. The drivers EZ Pass responder could stop working and they are unaware that they are accruing video toll fees. They may not have a bank account linked to their account to auto replenish. They may not receive proper notification from MVA of the video toll fees that they owe. These mistakes can lead to low-income drivers being trapped into a system of debt, and it puts them at greater risk of losing access to their reliable source of transportation.

MAP appreciates your consideration and urges the committee to issue a favorable report for SB 105.

Marylanders Against Poverty (MAP) is a coalition of service providers, faith communities, and advocacy organizations advancing statewide public policies and programs necessary to alleviate the burdens faced by Marylanders living in or near poverty, and to address the underlying systemic causes of poverty.