

SB0147 - Motor Vehicles - Operation When Approaching Disabled Vehicles

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/sb0147?ys=2022RS>

Good afternoon,

For the record I am David Helms and I reside in Silver Spring, Maryland. I am a member of the Montgomery County **Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Advisory Committee** but I am here today in my capacity as an individual and safety advocate. Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I kindly ask for a favorable report for Senate Bill 0147.

Here are a couple of points I just wanted to highlight:

1. Policy: Vision Zero

#EndTrafficViolence

Establishing Vision Zero; providing the purpose of the program is for planning and developing a State highway system that has zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries; requiring the Department of Transportation to designate a coordinator to oversee the implementation of Vision Zero; requiring the coordinator, in implementing Vision Zero, to collaborate with certain entities and include certain strategies; requiring that the funding for Vision Zero be as provided by the Governor in the State budget.

Enacted: October 1, 2019

<http://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Legislation/Details/HB0885?ys=2019rs>

2. Issue: More than 800 pedestrians die annually in crashes on U.S. interstates and other Freeways

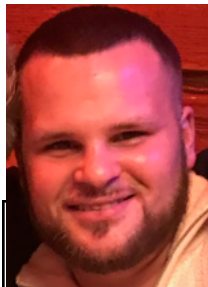
Insurance Institute for Highway Safety, December 2019

Since 2009, pedestrian fatalities increased 53% by 2018 and now account for 17% of roadway crash fatalities in the United States (2019) (**Maryland had 133 pedestrian fatalities in 2018, about 2-3 deaths are associated with drivers/passengers in highway disabled vehicles**). This increase also was present on interstates and other freeways, which experienced a 60% increase in pedestrian fatalities during 2009–2018.

Nearly one third involved “unintended” pedestrians who had been in a previous crash or were working on a vehicle. More recently, the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety (2014) examined pedestrian fatalities on interstate highways from 1993 to 2012 in the United States.

A larger proportion of pedestrians killed on interstates or other freeways died on dark and unlit roads.¹

*** **Death is virtually certain when a pedestrian is struck by a vehicle going 40 or more mph.**



Example: **Jerasimos Ray Blanton**, 33, Rockville, Maryland, killed on December 27, 2019 at 5:30AM.



Shortly before 5:30 a.m. this morning, troopers from the Rockville Barrack responded to the report of a crash at northbound I-270, north of Shady Grove Road. Upon their arrival, troopers found an unattended 2015 Ford Explorer elevated on a jack with extensive damage to the left side of the vehicle, on the right shoulder of the highway. A 2018 Freightliner flatbed truck was stopped further north on the right side of the road.



Obituary: Jerasimos Ray Blanton, 33

<https://www.rinaldifuneralservice.com/notices/JerasimosJerry-Blanton>

On Friday, December 27, 2019 of Rockville, MD. Jerasimos "Jerry" Blanton beloved son of Dimitra Kalivas and the late Orville Ray Blanton, brother of Nicholas Blanton, nephew of John Kalivas and fiance to Heather Blanton. The family will receive friends on Friday, January 3, 2019 from 9:30 am until the time of funeral services at 10:30 am at The Greek Orthodox Church of Saint George 7701 Bradley Blvd. Bethesda, MD 20817. Entombment Gate of Heaven Cemetery Mausoleum 13801 Georgia Avenue Silver Spring, MD 20906. In lieu of flowers the family requests memorial contributions to be made to The Greek Orthodox Church of Saint George

¹ Fatal pedestrian crashes on interstates and other freeways in the United States December 2019. Jin Wang, Jessica B. Cicchino
Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (IIHS)
<https://www.iihs.org/api/datastoredocument/bibliography/2197>

3. Move over for EVERYONE is consistent with Current Policy; Modifies Existing “Move Over” Transportation Statute, Enforcement, and Education/Outreach

Maryland’s “Move Over” laws require drivers approaching from the rear of an **emergency vehicle** using visual signals while stopped on a highway to, if possible, make a lane change into an available lane not immediately adjacent to the emergency vehicle

But why should drivers be forced to decide what type of vehicle has flashing lights to move over?

Approaching a disabled vehicle at 80-100 feet per second, how can drivers know if either it is a disabled vehicle or an emergency vehicle?

They can't... therefore, the prudent driver action should be to move over as soon as safe to do so.

This bill will compel drivers who encounter ANY vehicle with flashing lights on the shoulder to move over if they can safely do so.

The more drivers are conditioned for safe and appropriate behavior (and eliminating exceptions to rules making adoption less likely), the more safe law enforcement will be for “accidental pedestrians” and everyone else including law enforcement, emergency responders, and road crews.

4. This legislation will save lives!

I strongly encourage you to please support HB 1305 which amends the "Move Over" law to be inclusive of all disabled vehicles with flashers on, to simplify the law, make the law more enforceable, encourage safe driver behavior, and SAVE MANY LIVES!

Very Respectfully,

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