

WRITTEN TESTIMONY - January 18, 2022
(SB0087), Vehicle Laws – Intersections – Prohibited Acts

Testimony Delivered by: Kristy Daphnis, Montgomery County Resident
Bill Position: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, in support of SB 87. SB87 is a bill that will help contribute to safety – for both motorists and pedestrians; while also helping to alleviate traffic congestion and traffic flow concerns.

The Problem: Throughout the State of Maryland, our local jurisdictions and police officers lack the ability to enforce unsafe behaviors at intersections. Because there is no law or enforcement mechanism, motorists can block intersections and pedestrian infrastructure within intersections (e.g., crosswalks). This leads to an unsafe situation which reduces safety and increases vehicular congestion.

Currently, it is not unusual for motorists to block intersections and/or crosswalks – especially on busy State highway corridors, and during heavily congested periods. This not only creates obstructions of the intersection itself (further contributing to congestion and gridlock), it also contributes to blockage of pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure, significantly impeding safety for those trying to cross the street.

The Solution: Many States and localities across the Country already have legislation similar to SB87. However, we lack this in Maryland. Because we do not have this legislative framework, police are unable to enforce these unsafe behaviors, even in the most egregious of scenarios. Passage of SB87 will allow this enforcement to happen, deterring this behavior and improving safety in crosswalks, and reducing unnecessary gridlock and congestion.

I urge you to support SB87, to help improve roadway safety and to reduce gridlock and congestion across the State of Maryland.