



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: January 31, 2023
RE: HB0094 Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities

The MLLC supports HB0094 Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0094.

According to the Maryland Department of Transportation, there were 544 fatal crashes on state highways in 2022, claiming the lives of drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bikers, and cyclists.¹ The report also indicates speed as the primary cause of accidents.¹ A new study by the Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that Black and Hispanic Americans are disproportionately affected by traffic-related deaths nationwide.² Overall, the age-adjusted pedestrian death rate increased from 1.7 per 100,000 in 2009 to 2.2 in 2018.³ Every racial and ethnic group experienced an increase in pedestrian death rate. Hispanics, for instance, saw a pedestrian death rate increase from 2.4 to 2.9, putting them at the second-highest pedestrian death rate.³

This bill will expand the application of statewide authorization for local authorities to decrease the maximum speed limit to no less than 15 miles per hour after performing an engineering and traffic investigation, subject to certain restrictions on the use of speed monitoring systems. Lowering the speed limit can save lives by increasing drivers' reaction time to hazards, pedestrians, bikes, and other obstacles. Since Hispanics have the second highest pedestrian death rate, their community would be positively impacted by this policy since this bill will give the authority to local governments to lower the speed limits based on community needs.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0094.

1. [2021 Annual Report. \(n.d.\). Maryland Highway Safety Office.](#)
2. [Raifman, M. A., & Choma, E. F. \(2022\). Disparities in Activity and Traffic Fatalities by Race/Ethnicity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 63\(2\), 160-167.](#)
3. [Center for Disease Control and Prevention. \(2020\). Age-Adjusted Pedestrian Death Rates, by Race/Ethnicity — National Vital Statistics System, United States, 2009 and 2018. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 69.](#)

