

MCPA-MSA_HB 208 Street Racing and Exhibition Drivi

Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield

Position: FAV



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair and
Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 9, 2022

RE: **HB 208 – Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts,
Enforcement, and Penalties**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT** HB 208. This bill is intended to address public safety situations that occur from street racing and exhibition driving. The bill increases the points on an individual's license and the penalties associated with these activities.

Across Maryland, there have been continual concerns regarding the safety of our roadways due to the reckless and careless driving engaged in by Street Racers and Exhibition Drivers. The actions of these drivers, who often conduct such activities with large groups of competitors and observers, often cause roadways to be closed to other traffic, including first responders en route to provide care for others. They also cause others using our roadways, including pedestrians and bicyclists, to be placed in grave danger due to their actions. These actions include conducting speed contests on our roads, closing roadways with vehicles and human chains, and conducting exhibition driving activities - all with a careless disregard for others. These activities have been ongoing across our state for several years and require legislation to properly address such activities, help preserve the safety and welfare of all, and achieve our goals of reducing traffic and pedestrian-related fatalities and injuries.

Legislation recently passed to establish "special event zones" in Ocean City to address these types of events has been extremely effective. HB 208 extends these measures statewide.

HB 208 proposes a reasonable solution to address the egregious behavior of street racing and exhibition driving. For this reason, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT** HB 208 and urge a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.

Testimony for HB0208-updated.pdf

Uploaded by: Barbara Sollner-Webb

Position: FAV

Testimony for HB0208 (street car racing)

Hello! I am Barbara Sollner-Webb, a 50-year resident of Prince George's County and President ex officio of the West Laurel Civic Association. Speaking for myself and my husband, indeed for the vast majority of the 1800 residences in our civic association (very many of whom have spoke out in anguish about excessively loud hot rod-style road racing and its accompanying danger and noise), we strongly support HB0208 and urge its unanimous passage. When we want to enjoy the tranquility of our houses in our nice neighborhood, it seems unfair to be subjected to hellishly loud street noise being generated solely to satisfy some small people's egos.

from Barbara Sollner-Webb (17200 Melbourne Dr. Laurel MD 20707, bsw@jhmi.edu, 301-655-3552

Calverton Testimony HB208 272023.pdf

Uploaded by: Bernadine Karns

Position: FAV

Calverton Citizens Association

P. O. Box 21

Beltsville, Maryland 20704-0021

February 7, 2023

Kumar P. Barve *Chair*
Environment & Transportation Committee
House Office Building, Room 251
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB208, Street Racing and Exhibition Driving

Hello Chair Barve,

The Calverton Citizens Association and the Calverton community have had it. Enough is enough.

Enough is enough with street racing and exhibition driving. This dangerous behavior not only presents a danger to the nearby communities and citizens of Maryland. This dangerous behavior also presents a danger to anyone and anything along the path of the reckless and driving behavior. I heard that an older person was caught in an exhibition of doing wheelies on Powder Mill Road in Beltsville. This person suffered a medical emergency, and the emergency response was delayed. It all turned out good but this dangerous and reckless behavior could pose a threat to people who inadvertently get caught in this behavior. There was an incident that involved a Beltsville Police Officer. The officer was assaulted when he approached and tried to break up a street racing group. Luckily, as far as we know, no one has died from these street racing and exhibition driving groups. Something for all of us to ponder. There sure have been a lot of incidents where cars have run off of the road for no apparent reason. What could be the cause?

Please help our community and all communities in the state of Maryland. HB208 will improve the safety of life in our community, improve the safety of life in other communities and counties and will improve the safety of life for all Maryland residents. As I sit in my quiet house, it is very scary to hear the loud roar of these vehicles going down a road nearby. The roar of the engines is amazing.

Please vote yes on HB208 and help us get the street racing and exhibition driving off our area roads. Please give law enforcement tools to make this problem disappear from our streets. Please remove this dangerous behavior from our roads. Please give us quiet and safe roads where we can drive and walk.

Respectfully submitted,



Bernadine (Bernie) Karns, President
Calverton Citizens Association
3005 Gazebo Court
Silver Spring, MD 20904
301-572-8018 (H)
301-538-5280 (CP)

Calverton is a bi-county community located in both Prince George's and Montgomery Counties

Carrington 2023 Testimony HB208 - Street Racing an

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: FAV



CARRINGTON & ASSOCIATES, LLC

Integrity.Passion.Results

Since 2006



HB208 – Street Racing and Exhibition Driving - Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties

FAVORABLE

Carrington & Associates, LLC, on behalf of Sensys Gatso, requests a **FAVORABLE** report for HB147. This bill alters certain penalties and the points assessments for certain motor vehicle violations related to participation in a race or speed contest; prohibiting a person from engaging in exhibition driving on any highway or private property that is used for driving by the public; prohibiting a person from attending as a spectator certain race or speed contests or any engagement of exhibition driving; and authorizing the towing and impounding of a vehicle involved in a race or speed contest or exhibition driving.

[Sensys Gatso](#) is the leading provider of automated traffic enforcement solutions with a strong global presence. Their mission is saving lives by changing the driving behavior of motorists. They are firmly committed to improving road safety by reducing vehicle speed and red light negation, by optimizing traffic flows and by contributing to a sustainable urban environment, always in close partnership with governments and other authorities all over the world.

The Sensys Gatso Group has more than 60 years' experience in developing and manufacturing innovative traffic enforcement, traffic management and managed services solutions, delivered to more than 70 countries worldwide. Since 1997, Sensys Gatso has supported the Swedish Government to implement their globally embraced road traffic safety project '**Vision Zero**', aiming to achieve a road traffic system with no fatalities or serious injuries.

Sensys Gatso listens closely to the concerns of the residents in the communities they serve all over the world. No can escape witnessing first-hand the incidents of dangerous speeding and/or

racing contests on our public roads be it Silver Spring, Mt. Rainer, Ocean City or any of the other Cities and Towns across the globe that Sensys Gatso monitors and services.

It appears this behavior was exacerbated by the COVID Pandemic when empty roadways presented additional opportunities for these illegal activities. Sensys Gatso believes that additional penalties must be imposed to stem the tide of this behavior that is a threat to human life. Accidents that will occur during these contests will likely lead to severe bodily injury and/or death. It is understood that those persons that commit these offenses are aware that their actions are illegal and dangerous, therefore, each subsequent repeat offense of this title should result in severe, graduated penalties to the offender.

We collectively applaud the City of Baltimore for passing legislation to ban people from stunt driving and racing. As City Resident Ms. Esther Causion so perfectly stated, **"No matter how good your driving skills are, no matter how fun it seems, there is at a lot of danger to that, and there is a place that you can go and become a racecar driver if that's what you want to do, but the streets of Baltimore is not a place for that."**

For the stated reasons, we ask for a **FAVORABLE** report on HB208.

Please feel free to contact Darrell Carrington at darrell.carrington@verizon.net, if you would like any additional information.

HB208_djung_fav.pdf

Uploaded by: Deb Jung

Position: FAV



Howard County Council

Deb Jung
Councilmember

District 4

George Howard Building
3430 Court House Drive
Ellicott City, Maryland 21043-4392

February 7, 2023
HB208
Deb Jung
Howard County Council
FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Delegate Barve, Vice Chair Delegate Stein, and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee:

Thank you, Delegate Lehman and the 45 other Delegate sponsors for introducing HB208. This is a much-needed bill for local jurisdictions in Maryland.

While drag racing and exhibition driving has always been a problem, the instances of such activity grew exponentially during the COVID quarantine and became commonplace in many communities. Meet ups were planned via social media, large groups of cars would gather to race down major State roads and local streets, and local police were at a loss about how to stop this activity given the number of vehicles and the ability for the cars to disperse quickly.

As a Councilmember in Howard County, I am aware that most residents would welcome prohibitions and increased penalties for this type of activity. Complaints about loud engines and car racing frequently fill my Council inbox and were one of the most common concerns I heard when I was door knocking during my reelection campaign. My Councilmanic District is bounded by Route 29 and Route 108 and bisected by Route 32. Loud engine noise and car racing is a frequent occurrence on all of these roads. I know this because I hear it from Route 32 in my home almost every night. Not only does this activity take place on our major roads, it also occurs in the parking lots at the Columbia Mall, our Village Centers, including one that was defaced with tire tracks from a pop-up rally, and on local neighborhood streets creating extremely loud disturbances.

Our County has attempted to address the issue but has expressed the need for more tools to be successful. On August 8, 2022, one of our Columbia Village Boards held a town hall to discuss issues involving cars with modified engines racing through neighborhoods, disturbing the peace, and illegal street racing. I attended the meeting as a panelist, as did other elected officials, the Howard County Police Chief Der, and Police Major Justin Baker, who directs field operations.

Chief Der stated that the problem of car rallies started in October 2020 and that in May 2021 police throughout the state started working cooperatively because the situation had escalated to

include large groups of cars performing stunts for media posts. Chief Der noted that the police monitor social media for rally locations to prevent gatherings designed to disturb the peace and endanger public safety. Major Baker stated that the most effective deterrent at present is the equipment repair order, which requires modified exhaust systems to be restored to factory settings.

Former State Delegate Reid Novotny, another panelist that evening, related an incident he witnessed when returning home on Route 32 one evening with his child. He and nearby cars were brought to a stop by drag racers so that they could conduct an impromptu car race on the State highway. Needless to say, he expressed concern about the safety of his child during a routine trip home.

At the end of the town hall, the panel discussed the 2022 General Assembly bill that would have given police the ability to impound on site but was vetoed by Governor Hogan. The police in attendance that night felt that any increased penalties or powers would help improve responses to the calls that they get. We need to find more proactive ways to remove these dangerous drivers from our roads and this bill will go a long way to help in that effort.

I urge all of you to vote in favor of HB208. Thank your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Deb Jung
Councilmember, District 4

LEYDEN--Legislative Testimony--HB 208--Street Raci

Uploaded by: Edward Leyden

Position: FAV

AISHA N. BRAVEBOY
STATE'S ATTORNEY



JASON B. ABBOTT
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY STATE'S ATTORNEY

State's Attorney for Prince George's County
14735 Main Street, Suite M3403
Upper Marlboro, Maryland 20772
301-952-3500

February 9, 2023

Testimony in **Support** of

**HB 208 – Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement,
and Penalties**

Dear Chairman Barve, Vice Chairman Stein, and Members of the Committee:

I am writing to show my strong support for House Bill (HB) 208 on behalf of State's Attorney Aisha Braveboy and to urge a favorable report. I am an Assistant State's Attorney in the Special Prosecutions Unit in the State's Attorney's Office for Prince George's County.

As a member of the Special Prosecutions Unit, I prosecute, among other offenses, vehicular homicides and negligent driving resulting in life-threatening injuries. As a result, I am all too familiar with the reality that very many of the horrendous collisions the Special Prosecutions Unit investigates result from individuals who are engaged in street racing or simply "showing off," almost always in the pursuit of content to post on social media (such as Instagram and the like).

The provisions proposed under HB 208 to enhance penalties for highway racing and speed contests are well-justified and will strengthen the hand of law enforcement in quelling such conduct. So, too, will the proposed provisions empowering police officers to tow and impound vehicles utilized in these dangerous activities, especially if a conviction under these statutes can result in forfeiture of the seized vehicle. For these reasons, among others, I strongly support HB 208.

For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully urge a favorable report, and ultimately passage, on HB 208.

Sincerely,

/s/

Edward J. Leyden
Assistant State's Attorney – Special Prosecutions Unit
State's Attorney's Office for Prince George's County

House Bill 0208.pdf

Uploaded by: Erin Murphy

Position: FAV



BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT



Brandon M. Scott
Mayor

Michael S. Harrison
Police Commissioner

TO: The Honorable Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Erin C. Murphy, Esq., Director of Government Affairs, Baltimore Police Dept.

RE: House Bill 0208 Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts and Enforcement

DATE: February 7, 2023

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore Police Department **supports** House Bill 0208.

House Bill 0208 creates new penalties for those who participate in a race or speed contest. It also establishes new penalties for those engaging in exhibition driving on any highway or private property that is used for driving by the public and prohibits a person from attending as a spectator certain race or speed contests or exhibition driving.

Baltimore City has seen a large increase in exhibition driving events which typically draw hundreds of vehicles that disrupt communities and present dangers to other drivers. We have worked diligently to track these types of events and disrupt them when they occur to ensure the safety of both those attending and those passing by but these additional penalties will help in that effort.

Overall, the Baltimore Police Department believes that this bill would greatly assist in the prevention of crimes and contribute to our ability to provide for the public safety. Therefore, the Baltimore Police Department respectfully requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 0208.

HB208 Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Jenna O'Connell

Position: FAV



Prince George's County Municipal Association
An Association of 27 Municipalities



HOUSE BILL 208 – SUPPORT
Environment & Transportation Committee
February 7, 2023

The Prince George's County Municipal Association (PGCMA) writes to **SUPPORT House Bill 208 - Street Racing and Exhibition Driving - Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties** which would increase penalties and points assessments for violations related to participation in racing or speed contests. The bill would also establish a statewide prohibition on exhibition driving on any highway or private property that is used for driving by the general public. Additionally, the bill would authorize a police officer to order the towing and impounding of a vehicle that is driven in a race or speed contest or is the subject of an exhibition driving violation.

PGCMA recognizes that there are serious concerns for public safety upon our roadways due to intentionally dangerous driving engaged by Street Racers and Exhibition Drivers. Aside from the illegality of their fast driving, the recklessness of their decision making to get ahead of the competitors puts all parties at a hazardous risk for injury. This includes behavior such as weaving through roads, running stop signs or red lights and intentionally abrupt acceleration or braking. These activities typically occur in larger groups, contributing to traffic congestion and can even block first responders from being able to reach their emergency calls. No citizen in Maryland should have to bear the consequences of another individual's choice to drive recklessly.

This bill would send a strong message that Street Races and Exhibition Driving is strictly prohibited in Maryland as there will be penalties for such reckless behavior whether you are a driver or a spectator. For these reasons we believe this public safety measure will benefit municipalities in Prince George's County and across the state. Therefore, PGCMA respectfully requests a **favorable** report for **House Bill 208**. Thank you.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Patrick Wojahn'.

Patrick Wojahn (He/Him/His)
PGCMA President
240-988-7763 (C)
President@ThePGCMA.com

SafeRoadsMD HB208 Rec Favorable - Testimony Submis

Uploaded by: John Seng

Position: FAV



SafeRoadsMD

HB208

“Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties”

PLEASE SUPPORT

**MARYLAND COALITION FOR ROADWAY SAFETY, INC.
URGES YOUR SUPPORT FOR HB208**

February 7, 2023

TO:

Honorable Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Honorable Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
Honorable Members of the Committee
Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

FROM:

John J. Seng, Chair
SafeRoadsMD - *Maryland Coalition For Roadway Safety, Inc.*
JohnJSeng@gmail.com (202) 468-7682
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/marylandcoalitionhighwaysafety>

My name is John Seng, volunteer Chair and founder of the *Maryland Coalition For Roadway Safety, Inc.*

Our 200+ member organization **strongly supports the enactment of HB208, the “Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties” bill.**

We request that the House Environment and Transportation Committee submit a favorable review of this bill to address a major threat to public safety and the welfare of our communities.

The Problem

It’s truly “battle stations.” The public is fed up. Frankly, authorities are long overdue to take significant steps to stem the increased tide of mayhem on our streets, roads, bridges and town centers. Our roadways and intersections erupt into chaotic, dangerous playgrounds, caused by individuals who size up law enforcement and government as too weak-willed and ill-equipped to discourage or intervene.

People in municipalities across Maryland and residents are threatened by overt lawless behavior in the form of street racing, rallies, tire burnouts, and on and on. This as-yet unchecked behavioral trend erodes confidence in government and its ability to enforce laws that exist to benefit – and especially – protect all.

We recognize the potential for serious injury and death as real and frightening. And please consider the disruption to businesses and homeowners. What’s more, this behavior further taxes an already strained, embattled and understaffed police departments.

Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc. PO Box 7, Olney, Maryland 20830

Take This Necessary Step Towards A Solution

SafeRoadsMD agrees with the Bill's sponsors that **the best answer is to markedly increase sanctions to deter criminal behavior**. Increase the cost of illegal and unruly harmful behavior.

The strengthened and, importantly, when published and enforced sanctions of HB208 will send a powerful message that Maryland lawmakers take this growing problem seriously and intend to restore safety and calm on roads and in communities: That continued roadway disruptions will not be tolerated, and violators will face serious sanctions.

Maryland Lawmakers Can Create A Maryland Road Safety Legacy!

As we've shared in submitting comments on potential Maryland General Assembly draft road safety legislation: Is it possible that the Maryland General Assembly could boldly take a preeminent, leadership role during this 2023 session by sending the message to the public and the legal system that Maryland lawmakers put 100% into ensuring that safety comes first? Can the Maryland General Assembly join with Governor Moore to ensure that **no one and nothing's left behind in making roadway safety a #1 priority?**

Background – SafeRoadsMD – Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.

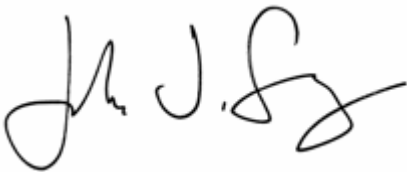
Our founding organizations include the *American Automobile Association (AAA) Mid-Atlantic*, the *Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA)*, *The Route 210 Traffic Safety Committee* in Prince George's County and a group of Maryland home owner associations. Alarmed by growing roadway violence in Maryland, we were established to call more attention to and combat the onslaught of speed and noise on our roads. The *Coalition* represents the interests of communities and individuals who directly suffer the consequences of illegal operation of motor vehicles.

The persistent toll that should concern us all? **2023 finished poorly as the sixth consecutive year in which between 500-600 people died from Maryland roadway violence.**

You Can Do It!

We thank you and the Committee for your review of our position, and urge you to submit a favorable recommendation and support for HB208.

Sincerely,



John J. Seng
Chair

cc: Governor Wes Moore; Ragina Ali, AAA MidAtlantic; Greater Olney Civic Association (GOCA); SafeRoadsMD *Coalition* Board of Directors and membership

HB208 Prince George's County Council_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Julie Rogers

Position: FAV



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

HB208

Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts,
Enforcement and Penalties

Lehman, Pena-Melnyk, Addison, Amprey Attar, Atterbeary Bagnall, B. Barnes Barve, Boaf, Boyce, Cardin Chang, Charles, Crosby, Crutchfield, Ebersole Fennell, Foley, Forbes, Fraser-Hidalgo, Grammer, Guyton, Harris, Harrison, Healey, Hill, Holmes, D. Jones, Kaiser, Kipke, McCaskill, T. Morgan, Palakovich Carr, Patterson, Phillips, Ruth, Shetty Smith, Solomon, Stewart, Taveras, Taylor, Terrasa, Toles Turner, Valderrama, Vogel Watson, Williams, Wilson and Woods x

POSITION

SUPPORT

HB 208- Altering certain penalties and the points assessments for certain motor vehicle violations related to participation in a race or speed contest; prohibiting a person from engaging in exhibition driving on any highway or private property used for driving by the public; authorizing the towing and impounding of a vehicle involved in violations related to participation in a race, speed contest, or exhibition driving; providing penalties of imprisonment up to 1 year or a fine up to \$1,000, or both in the event of bodily injury; etc. Effective June 1, 2023.

This bill increases penalties and points assessments for violations related to participation in racing or speed contests. The bill also establishes a statewide prohibition on exhibition driving on any highway or private property that is used for driving by the general public. Additionally, the bill authorizes a police officer to order the towing and impounding of a vehicle that is driven in a race or speed contest or is the subject of an exhibition driving violation.

HB208 Has the potential to increase safety on State roads and Highways. Due to penalty provisions, minimal increase in general fund revenues and potential minimal increase in general fund expenditures. Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) revenues are not materially affected; the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) can implement the bill with existing resources. The Judiciary can handle the increased workload with existing resources. Enforcement can be handled with existing resources. Additionally, Prince Georges County Council has historically supported this measure in past sessions.

For the foregoing reasons, we believe the residents of Maryland will benefit greatly from the increased safety aspects of this measure. Prince George's County Council SUPPORTS this measure and respectfully requests a favorable report from this committee on this legislation.



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

Prepared by: Green and Associates

On behalf of Prince George's County Council

house bill 0208 Street Racing.pdf

Uploaded by: Karen Coakley

Position: FAV

Chairman Barve, Vice Chair Stein and members of the committee.

My name is Karen Coakley, President of the Beltsville Citizen's Association. I am a lifelong community activist, supporting 1st responders. I have served on the Prince George's County wide Fire Chiefs CAC and represented my community on the local Police district CAC. I am back again like I promised last year when I testified for similar legislation.

How? When and Why??? Did Someone's ENTERTAINMENT become More important than SOMEONES LIFE???

From the moment I saw I 95 closed for Stunt Drivers Entertainment in 2021. My 1st thoughts were of Potential Innocent Victims When Entertainment Road Closures delay. An Innocent Victim who lost their life. An Innocent Victim whose injuries wound up being significantly worse. Why you ask were the First Responders delayed??? Entertainment Road Closures is the answer.

Racing parties create 3 types of victims:

- 1) The INNOCENT because the First Responders were delayed due to Entertainment Road Closures.
- 2) Spectators such as those who lost their lives on Indian Head highway in Prince George's county
- 3) Last but not least Police Officers dealing with several 100 drivers and spectators who outnumber them by at least 20 to 1. These situations create mob mentality. Watch the video from Laurel Race party in the spring of 2022
Someone at that Racing Entertainment Party opened the gas tank of the police cruiser. I Doubt They were putting gasoline in the tank.

Fortunately Someone prevented anything from going into the gas tank.

If the tank was ignited the police officer and spectators could have died or suffered needless severe injuries

In an Emergency Situation Seconds Count!!! Every Seconds Matter!!!

The quicker First Responder arrive...Fire damages are less,
Medical treatment is delivered sooner.

The ramifications of the emergency situation are not as severe because of
Entertainment Road Closures delays.

LIVES ARE LOST!!!

What do you say to Citizens of Maryland who's suffer damaged or lost
property,

What do you say to whose loved one is injured or DIES?

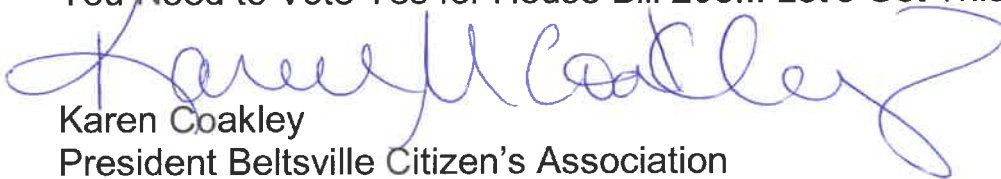
Is someone's ENTERTAINMENT more important than losses to citizens of
Maryland?

How do you tell those families that Maryland puts a greater priority on
ENTERTAINMENT than LIFE?

LIVES MATTER More!!!

You Need To Do Right By The Citizens of Maryland!!!

You Need to Vote Yes for House Bill 208!!! Let's Get This Done!!!



Karen Coakley
President Beltsville Citizen's Association
4412 Tonquil Street
Beltsville, Maryland

301-741-7672

HB 208 - MoCo_Elrich_FAV (GA 23).pdf

Uploaded by: Marc Elrich

Position: FAV



OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Marc Elrich
County Executive

February 9, 2023

TO: The Honorable Kumar P. Barve
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Marc Elrich
County Executive

RE: House Bill 208, *Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties*
Support

I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 208, *Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and Penalties*.

House Bill 208 would change the penalties and points assessed for motorists engaging in exhibition driving on any highway or private property that is used for driving by the public and would authorize the police to tow and impound involved vehicles.

Exhibition driving means intentionally driving a vehicle in a manner that disturbs the peace by creating unnecessary engine noise, and associated tire squeals or sliding caused by the car's abrupt accelerating and braking. Montgomery County has experienced an increasing number of "car meet-ups" whereby large groups of people converge at pre-designated locations to cheer and encourage street racing. The events have resulted in unauthorized closures of public roadways and have endangered drivers and pedestrians alike in our communities. House Bill 208 would enhance public safety by sending a strong message to everyone that street racing and exhibition driving is strictly prohibited and that those engaged in it will be penalized.

I respectfully request that the Environment and Transportation Committee vote favorable on the bill.

cc: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

WRITTEN TESTIMONY EXHIBITION DRIVING HB 208.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 208 – Vehicle Laws – Race and Speed Contests – Penalties

SUPPORT

GOOD AFTERNOON MR. CHAIRMAN, MR. VICE CHAIR AND COLLEAGUES. FOR THE RECORD I'M DELEGATE MARY LEHMAN AND TODAY I AM ASKING FOR YOUR FAVORABLE CONSIDERATION OF HB 208, ENHANCED PENALTIES IN STUNT AND SPEED CONTESTS.

HB 208 CALLS FOR INCREASED PENALTIES FOR DRIVERS IN WHAT IS REFERRED TO AS EXHIBITION DRIVING CONTESTS. IT COVERS STUNT AND HIGH-SPEED DRIVING ON PUBLIC ROADS AND IN PARKING LOTS. WE HAVE VIDEO CLIPS TO SHARE. THE ONE IN DOWNTOWN SILVER SPRING WAS FROM LAST WEEKEND.

CUE VIDEOS!

LAST YEAR, THE COMMITTEE TOOK UP, AMENDED AND PASSED THE SENATE VERSION OF THIS BILL. FORMER GOVERNOR HOGAN VETOED IT BASED ON A CONCERN THAT IT WOULD INTERFERE WITH WORCESTER COUNTY'S ABILITY

UNDER STATE LAW TO CRACK DOWN ON EXHIBITION DRIVING IN OCEAN CITY.
THOSE CONCERNS HAVE BEEN ADDRESSED.

THERE ARE FOUR MAIN DETERRENTS IN THIS BILL THAT WILL HELP REDUCE THE
NUMBER OF THESE CONTESTS AND SEND A CLEAR MESSAGE TO IN-STATE AND OUT-
OF-STATE DRIVERS AND REPEAT OFFENDERS THAT WE TAKE THESE DANGEROUS
CONTESTS SERIOUSLY.

THE BILL DOES FOUR MAIN THINGS:

- FIRST, THE BILL MANDATES A COURT APPEARANCE; CURRENTLY A DRIVER
IN A CAR CONTEST CAN PRE-PAY ANY FINES THAT ARE ASSESSED.
WORCESTER COUNTY HAS BEEN ABLE TO REDUCE SPEED CONTESTS
SIGNIFICANTLY BY REQUIRING MOTORISTS TO GO TO COURT AND FACE A
JUDGE.
- SECONDLY, THE BILL INCREASES THE POINTS ASSESSED AGAINST DRIVERS
CONVICTED OF VIOLATING THIS LAW. DRIVERS WILL RECEIVE 8 POINTS IF
THERE IS NO BODILY INJURY; 12 POINTS IF THE EVENT CAUSES BODILY
INJURY. **THIS IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE** 8 POINTS RESULTS IN THE
SUSPENSION OF A LICENSE; 12 POINTS RESULTS IN REVOKATION.
- THIRDLY, IT AUTHORIZES A FINE OF UP TO \$1,000 UPON CONVICTION FOR A
CONTEST WITH OR WITHOUT BODILY INJURY, UP FROM \$500.
- FINALLY, IT GIVES OFFICERS DISCRETION TO IMPOUND THE VEHICLE WHEN
WARRANTED FOR SAFETY REASONS HAVING TO DO WITH THE CAR OR THE
DRIVER – FOR EXAMPLE THE CAR ITSELF IS UNSAFE OR THE DRIVER HAS A

SUSPENDED LICENSE OR IS UNLICENSED. OFFICERS ALREADY HAVE THIS
DISCRETION FOR OTHER TRAFFIC VIOLATIONS.

MR. CHAIR, COLLEAGUES, THESE CONTESTS HAVE GROWN IN FREQUENCY IN PART
BECAUSE OUR EXISTING LAW IS TOO LAX. ABSENT MORE SERIOUS PENALTIES,
EXHIBITION DRIVING WILL CONTINUE TO BE A SERIOUS PROBLEM. THANK YOU FOR
YOUR CONSIDERATION. I URGE YOUR FAVORABLE REPORT.

#####

2023 HB208 Testimony to Transportation Committee.p

Uploaded by: Nancy Turner Smith

Position: FAV

Good morning Maryland legislators,

We are grateful that Delegate Lehman's bill, HB208 (Street Racing and Exhibition Driving), is being reviewed by the House Environment and Transportation Committee. We are asking you to provide strong support for this important legislation, and as the legislative process proceeds, we ask that you attend to those provisions that met with resistance and ultimately resulted in veto last year.

My family and our neighbors have made countless calls to local, state, and federal police about the noise, traffic disruption, and reckless endangerment caused by unlawful car meets. We were astonished to learn that these gatherings frequently shut down roadways so that 100s of motorists are immobilized (even 1,000s in at least one case) – and these motorists have included first responders and persons needing emergency medical attention. Moreover, we know that hundreds of youths acting together have demonstrated defiant and even aggressive behavior toward our law enforcement officers.

The organizers of these car meets target Maryland because our penalties are not effective deterrents. We are aware that penalties have been strengthened for Ocean City and we ask only that similar law is enacted across the state. We ask that perpetrators face the possibility of arrest, steep fines, points on the driver's license, and vehicle impoundment or forfeiture (for multiple offenses).

Thank you for hearing us. Please support HB208.

Nancy Turner Smith and Jim Smith
Laurel, MD

nanturn@gmail.com

2023 HB208 Testimony to Transportation Committee.p

Uploaded by: Nancy Turner Smith

Position: FAV

Good afternoon Maryland legislators,

We are grateful that Delegate Lehman's bill, HB208 (Street Racing and Exhibition Driving), is being reviewed by the House Environment and Transportation Committee. We are asking you to provide strong support for this important legislation, and as the legislative process proceeds, we ask that you attend to those provisions that met with resistance and ultimately resulted in veto last year.

My family and our neighbors have made countless calls to local, state, and federal police about the noise, traffic disruption, and reckless endangerment caused by unlawful car meets. We were astonished to learn that these gatherings frequently shut down roadways so that 100s of motorists are immobilized (even 1,000s in at least one case) – and these motorists have included first responders and persons needing emergency medical attention. Moreover, we know that hundreds of youths acting together have demonstrated defiant and even aggressive behavior toward our law enforcement officers.

The organizers of these car meets target Maryland because our penalties are not effective deterrents. We are aware that penalties have been strengthened for Ocean City and we ask only that similar law is enacted across the state. We ask that perpetrators face the possibility of arrest, steep fines, points on the driver's license, and vehicle impoundment or forfeiture (for multiple offenses).

Thank you for hearing us. Please support HB208.

Nancy Turner Smith and Jim Smith
Laurel, MD

nanturn@gmail.com

MCPA-MSA_HB 208 Street Racing and Exhibition Drivi

Uploaded by: Natasha Mehu

Position: FAV



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair and
Members of the Judiciary Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 9, 2022

RE: **HB 208 – Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts,
Enforcement, and Penalties**

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT** HB 208. This bill is intended to address public safety situations that occur from street racing and exhibition driving. The bill increases the points on an individual's license and the penalties associated with these activities.

Across Maryland, there have been continual concerns regarding the safety of our roadways due to the reckless and careless driving engaged in by Street Racers and Exhibition Drivers. The actions of these drivers, who often conduct such activities with large groups of competitors and observers, often cause roadways to be closed to other traffic, including first responders en route to provide care for others. They also cause others using our roadways, including pedestrians and bicyclists, to be placed in grave danger due to their actions. These actions include conducting speed contests on our roads, closing roadways with vehicles and human chains, and conducting exhibition driving activities - all with a careless disregard for others. These activities have been ongoing across our state for several years and require legislation to properly address such activities, help preserve the safety and welfare of all, and achieve our goals of reducing traffic and pedestrian-related fatalities and injuries.

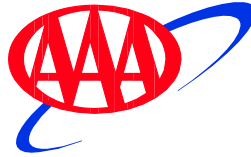
Legislation recently passed to establish "special event zones" in Ocean City to address these types of events has been extremely effective. HB 208 extends these measures statewide.

HB 208 proposes a reasonable solution to address the egregious behavior of street racing and exhibition driving. For this reason, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT** HB 208 and urge a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.

HB 208 - AAA's Support of Street Racing and Exhibi

Uploaded by: Ragina Ali

Position: FAV



**AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 208
Street Racing and Exhibition Driving - Prohibited Acts, Enforcement, and
Penalties**

Sponsor: Delegates Kerr and Fair

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **supports House Bill 208**, which increases penalties for those participating in illegal racing or speed contests on Maryland roads; establishes a **statewide ban** on exhibition driving on any highway or private property that is used for driving by the general public; and, authorizes a police officer to order the towing and impounding of a vehicle that is driven in a race or is the subject of an exhibition driving violation.
- The bottom line is—speed kills—and our roadways and parking lots are not race tracks.
- Recently, law enforcement across the country, and here in Maryland, have cited an increase in street racing.
- In May 2019, 19-year old, Zach Friedlander and his dog were killed in Baltimore County as a result of a crash where the driver who hit him was reportedly street racing and driving at 116 mph in a 35 mph zone.
- In 2009, two people were killed and two more were seriously injured in Woodlawn as a result of illegal street racing on Interstate 70.
- And, in 2008, eight people were killed in Prince George's County when the driver of a car that was participating in an illegal race crashed into a crowd of spectators.
- In 2021, according to a **Washington Post article**, Maryland State Police conducted a joint law enforcement initiative focused on speeding and aggressive driving for a four-day period on Interstate 70, which resulted in the issuance of more than 300 traffic citations and warnings.
- While recent research by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety found that even modestly higher speeds at the time of a crash dramatically increase the chances of severe injury and death, these dangerous illegal street races amplify those risks.
- Illegal street racing endangers everyone, including spectators. The reckless and irresponsible actions of those who choose to treat our roads as a race track have resulted in traffic disruption and fatalities on our roads.
- On behalf of AAA Mid-Atlantic's over one million Maryland members, we urge the Committee to give **HB 208 a favorable** report.

Contacts:

*Ragina C. Ali, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Public and Government Affairs Manager
443.465.5020*

*Sherrie Sims, GS Proctor & Associates
Senior Associate
410.733.7171*

Delegate Mary Lehman- Legislation- HB0208.pdf

Uploaded by: Joseph Gomes VP-CCA/PGC

Position: INFO

Maryland Government Politics/ Policy (Mary Lehman – Delegate)

Legislation - HB0208 (maryland.gov): [Legislation - HB0208 \(maryland.gov\)](https://legis.maryland.gov/legislation/article.aspx?id=2018-02-000208)

Enough is enough with street racing and exhibition driving. Please help our community and all communities in the state of Maryland. HB0208 will improve the quality of life in our community, in other communities and for all Maryland residents. It is very scary to hear the loud roar of these vehicles coming down the road. Please vote yes on HB0208 and help us get street racing and exhibition driving off our area roads. Please give law enforcement tools to make this problem disappear from our streets. Please remove this dangerous behavior from our roads. Please give us quiet and safe roads where we can drive and walk.

VP Joseph Gomes (PGC)

Calverton Citizens Association

Beltsville, Maryland