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DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

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Spending Affordability Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight

Joint Committee on Management of
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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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SB 229
Vehicle Laws - Noise Abatement Monitoring Systems
Authorization, Use, and Penalties

Good Afternoon Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein and Members of Environment and Transportation Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 229, Vehicle Laws – Noise Abatement Monitoring Systems – Authorization, Use, and Penalties. Loud vehicles are a quality of life issue for many of our communities, especially those located near state highways. As we all know, it's illegal in Maryland to modify your car's muffler, to operate a vehicle with an illegally modified muffler, or to operate a vehicle that exceeds 80 decibels. Many police departments don't want to pull over drivers because officers aren't equipped with decibel meters, this makes enforcement difficult.

How can we resolve this? New technology is emerging to detect loud vehicles and to automatically send the owner of the vehicle a citation. It's like a speed camera, but for noise. Multiple companies are developing this technology, including a company based in here in Maryland. Two states (CA and NY) have passed legislation to allow pilot programs of the technology. New York City recently launched a pilot program and has issued tickets. Other jurisdictions have done pilots in recent years.

The Senate amended this bill to be a pilot program in three County's: Anne Arundel, Montgomery, and Prince George's County. This legislation would enable the local governments to use noise cameras to detect and issue warnings to vehicles that exceed Maryland's noise thresholds. The legislation is based on our speed camera program and has the similar safeguards built in. A local government would need to authorize the use of the sound cameras.

Rental car companies are exempt from the provisions.

SB229 prohibits the camera vendor's fee being contingent on a per-warning basis.

I respectfully request a favorable report on SB229.