

Testimony SB963 Transportation Study on Speed Limi

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Position: FAV

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Budget and Taxation Committee
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Joint Committee on Pensions

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson

SB 963: Transportation - Study on Speed Limits - Interstate 495 and Connected Highways

Good afternoon Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and members of the Finance Committee I am here to present SB903- Transportation - Study on Speed Limits - Interstate 495 and Connected Highways

This bill aims to ensure the safety of drivers as they travel on Maryland highways. With over 260,000 people getting stuck in traffic on I-495 every day, and merging congestion leading to accidents on major state highways. It is important to consider consistent highway speed levels to reduce traffic and accidents. In Maryland, there is an average of 110,000 car crashes per year, and this bill aims to help reduce that number. We have to help the drivers within Maryland reduce the impacts of merging between the various State highways.

Under this legislation, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) will conduct a comprehensive study on the effects of speed limit changes on highways in the state that connect to I-495. MDOT will consult with local officials and stakeholders who have expertise in traffic safety issues to gather insights on the prevalence of accidents, traffic congestion, and existing speed limits on these highways over the past five years. By analyzing this data, we can develop an effective solution to address the concerns of drivers traveling through Maryland. With this study being enacted we would have the knowledge to tackle and address the speeding and traffic problems of the great State of Maryland. If enacted, this bill will provide the knowledge needed to create a plan that ensures the safety of all Maryland drivers.

Therefore, I strongly recommend issuing a favorable report on SB963.

SB0963 - SHA - Study on 495 Speed Limits - LOI_FIN

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Position: INFO



Wes Moore
Governor
Aruna Miller
Lieutenant Governor
Paul J. Wiedefeld
Secretary

March 21, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 963 – Transportation – Study on Speed Limits – Interstate 495 and Connected Highways

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 963 but offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 963 requires the MDOT to conduct a study on the implications of speed limit changes on highways connected to I-495, with a report to be submitted by December 31, 2023, on the findings and recommendations from the study.

To complete the required study, MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) would need to review and evaluate the entire I-495 corridor, numerous interchanges, and connected highways. To complete this comprehensive study, it would require significant State resources, as well as consultant resources.

Due to the scope of the study, SHA anticipates needing additional time to complete the study; SHA would request that the reporting requirement be extended to June 1, 2024, to allow for the study to be completed and report be submitted.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates on Senate Bill 963.

Respectfully submitted,

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