

SB675_AFSCME3_UNF.pdf

Uploaded by: Denise Gilmore

Position: UNF



190 West Ostend St., #201
Baltimore, MD 21230
Phone: 410.547.1515
Fax: 410.837.5436

Patrick Moran - President

SB 675 - Howard County and St. Mary's County - Driver's Licenses - Driver Skills Examinations

POSITION: UNFAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 represents over 1,200 state employees who work in the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) branches statewide. SB 675 promotes the establishment of pilot programs in Howard and St. Mary's counties to allow for private drivers' schools to administer the examinations required to obtain certain driver's licenses here in Maryland. AFSCME Council 3 is opposed to SB 675 because instead of fixing the issues that are causing staffing shortages among MVA Driver's License Agents, it provides the opportunity for two counties to privatize a critical function within the MVA – the test that determines if an applicant has the necessary skills to safely drive on our roads.

The purpose of drivers' schools is to teach applicants the skills to be able to pass the examination required to obtain a driver's license. A conflict of interest can occur when this same entity charges applicants to administer the same test now. Of course, such conflicts can be mitigated with the proper regulation and oversight, but many of our regulatory and inspection job classifications over been abolished over the last decade and critical shortages exist within these job titles as well. As of Nov.1, 2022, the Maryland Department of Transportation had 996 vacant positions.

As is often the concern when public services are privatized, SB 675 also advantages those who can afford to pay for private examination *and* additional licensing fees while ignoring the issues that plaguing the public service which are free and available to all. Any amount spent on contracting this service out would be better spent back on state employee salaries and benefits. DLS reports in the [FY24 MVA Budget Analysis](#) (pg. 10), that "departing employees are often moving to comparable positions in surrounding jurisdictions, such as the District of Columbia, that may offer more attractive salaries and benefits." AFSCME members know firsthand how critical it is that Marylanders can obtain licensure in a timely and efficient manner. Despite limited resources, our MVA members do excellent work ensuring the safety of Marylanders on all our roads. We should support their work with more staffing resources and not privatize it.

For these reasons, we urge the committee to provide an ***unfavorable*** report on SB 675. Thank you for your consideration.

Every AFSCME Maryland State and University contract guarantees a right to union representation.
An employee has the right to a union representative if requested by the employee.
800.492.1996

Find us: afscmemd.org
Like us: facebook.com/AFSCMEMD
Follow/Tweet us: [@afscmemaryland](https://twitter.com/afscmemaryland)

SB0675 - MVA - Howard County and St. Mary's County

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

March 2, 2023

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 675 – Howard County and St. Mary's County -
Driver's Licenses - Driver Skills Examinations***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 675 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 675 gives the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) the authority to conduct a pilot program in Howard and St. Mary's Counties, to authorize driver's education schools to conduct and administer driver skills examinations for license applicants. Licensed and authorized driver's schools must conduct the driver's skills examination using approved methods under a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the MVA or the MVA will terminate their authorization. It further requires driver's schools to only include those who have two years of experience as a Driver's License Agent (DLA).

Senate Bill 675 would require significant changes to the current methods by which the MVA conducts driver skills testing and issues licenses. Under Senate Bill 675, the MVA would be responsible for ensuring consistency among the driver's education schools, including that they obtain the proper resources for testing, how tests are conducted, staff training, and compliance with additional standards and regulations currently met by the MVA branch offices. Approximately 72,092 people complete driver's education annually at the 350 driving school branches in the State, and the MVA administers approximately 163,279 skills tests per year. The two counties selected for the pilot program could limit the number of driving schools that could qualify to meet the requirements of the MVA, with 41 total schools between primary and branch locations located in the two counties. Additionally, there are further implications regarding the process for once a test is passed, and when and if a driver's education school would charge a fee for a license.

Under Senate Bill 675, DLAs employed by the driving school must have a minimum of two years of experience in order to administer tests, which could impact qualification for the pilot program. The MVA currently has an established process for DLA training and certification; a lead employee trains new DLAs on how to conduct a non-commercial skills tests based on the standards established by the MVA. No independent tests can be administered by the DLA trainee until these standards are met.

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Page Two

Lastly, the MVA has a dedicated staff of inspectors that currently audit the driving schools for compliance in their current capacities. To implement Senate Bill 675, the MVA would need additional resources to meet the demands of increased audits.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 675.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer
Administrator
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
410-787-7830

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090