

SB528

Favorable With Amendments

Senator Smith
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Smith,

My name is Michele Westfall, and I'm the chair of the Maryland Advisory Council on Deaf and Hard of Hearing (MACDHH). MACDHH advises the Maryland Governor's Office of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing on matters and issues affecting the Deaf, Hard of Hearing, and DeafBlind communities. My position on this bill is favorable with amendments.

The Ignition Interlock System Program was created with good intentions, which was to keep drunk drivers off the road and to provide them with alcohol education classes. Unfortunately, some drivers with hearing losses have encountered difficulties with accessibility of the devices and alcohol education classes required by the program. The devices which test the driver's alcohol levels come with auditory alerts, which drivers with hearing losses are not able to hear, and the placement of the devices' fairy-size light make it very difficult for the driver to see safely and easily during the daytime. As a result, such drivers have been unfairly hit with penalties such as rolling retest violations, additional fines, extended participation in the program, suspension, or revocation of their driver's license.

We believe that the amendments added by Senator West will help these drivers, and we support this bill as amended. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Michele Westfall
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