



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

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Mark Belton
County Administrator

February 29, 2024

Bill: HB 972 – Motor Vehicles - Off-Highway Vehicles - Clarifications and Revisions
Committee: House – Environment and Transportation
Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Chairman Korman, Vice Chairwoman Boyce, and Members:

On behalf of the Charles County Commissioners, this letter is to express the support of the Board for HB 972— Motor Vehicles - Off-Highway Vehicles - Clarifications and Revisions, as request amendment to the bill as herein described.

Charles County has experienced a significant increase in complaints involving the operation of off-road vehicles on our public roads in a reckless and dangerous manner, potentially endangering the lives of the operators and bystanders. Additionally, operators often trespass on private property.

While these vehicles are already illegal for use on public roadways and private property without the permission of the owner, violators have not been adequately deterred, and often times reclaim their vehicles and resume the prohibited activity in short order. Off-road motorcycles and all-terrain vehicles, when operated illegally, are a threat to other motor vehicles and pedestrians alike. For this reason, we support HB 972 as a positive step by the General Assembly to curtail this increasingly common problem.

HB 972 is limited to violations of “the Maryland Vehicle Law.” In addition to witnessing reckless behavior on our highways, Charles County has also experienced individuals driving off-road vehicles on public and private property and causing damage. These acts are violations of §6-404 and §6-405 of the Criminal Law Article and are not covered by HB 972 as currently written. We therefore request that HB 972 be amended to include applicability to violations of §6-404 and §6-405 of the Criminal Law Article.

We appreciate the opportunity to provide our support and request for amendment to HB 972.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President

cc: Charles County Delegation