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Testimony in Support of HB770  
House Environment and Transportation Committee  
February 22, 2024

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee for allowing me to testify in support of HB770. My name is Ian Goldstein, VP of Government Affairs, with Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD). MADD represents the millions of victims and survivors of drunk and impaired driving crashes. MADD's mission is a future with no more victims. MADD thanks Delegate Schmidt for authoring and introducing this lifesaving legislation.

MADD urges the Maryland legislature to pass HB770 which would make improvements to Nick's Law, by strengthening penalties for operating a vessel under the influence of alcohol or other impairing substances. In 2022, Maryland had 14 fatal boating crashes, and alcohol was the leading cause of crashes. According to the U.S. Coast Guard, boaters are ten times more likely to be in a fatal boating crash with a BAC of .1.<sup>i</sup>

HB770 not only strengthens the amount of time an offender is prohibited from operating a vessel on the waters, but it also creates a database with the Natural Resources Police Force accessible to a natural resources police officer. The creation of a database will ensure that BUI offenders will not continue their behavior on Maryland's waterways, creating danger for operators of other vessels.

Maryland's current BUI laws can deter someone from operating a vessel under the influence of drugs and alcohol; however, strengthening the current law with longer suspensions for those who break the law will make offenders think twice before operating a vessel while impaired. The goal of HB770 is to deter illegal behavior on our waterways. Mr. Chairman, and Members of the Committee, please pass HB770 to ensure safety on our waterways for everyone. Thank You.

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<sup>i</sup> Maryland Association for Justice, Boating Under the Influence, <https://www.mdforjustice.com/?pg=MAJRecentNews&blAction=showEntry&blogEntry=96989#:~:text=Unfortunately%2C%20Maryland%20saw%20fourteen%20fatal,those%20of%20a%20second%20DUI.>