



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

February 8, 2024

Committee: House Environment and Transportation

Bill: HB 278 - Urban State Highways - Speed Limits - Exceptions

Position: Favorable

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) supports House Bill 278 which, through an expedited process, will significantly improve roadway safety by permitting the State Highway Administration (SHA) to lower the speed limit on urban highway by five mile per hour without the need for a traffic study.

As defined, an “urban highway” constitutes a highway located within the boundaries of a municipal corporation, so this bill has potentially broad impact to the MML membership. There are instances when a municipal government would request a lower speed limit on a state highway based on safety concerns on that particular roadway. Removing the barrier of a traffic study to just reduce the speed limit on urban highways operated by SHA makes these types of requests for safety enhancements easier to implement.

One critical function of local government is to promote the safe use of public rights-of-way by all users. While municipal governments have broad authority to enact safety measures on local roads, SHA has jurisdiction over many main streets within municipalities. HB 278 should assist local input on state roads become more impactful.

The provisions of HB 278 should significantly assist municipal governments promote roadway safety through SHA. For this reason, the League respectfully requests that the committee provide House Bill 278 with a favorable report.

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