



Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville
HB 278 - Urban State Highways – Speed Limits – Exceptions
SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Chairman Korman and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee. I'm Marissa Valeri, Rockville City Councilmember and I thank you for this opportunity. On behalf of the Mayor and Council, I want to thank Delegate Kerr for sponsoring this critically important legislation.

The Mayor and Council unanimously support HB 278. This legislation aligns with Rockville's Vision Zero program to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries by 2030, while increasing safe, healthy, and fair mobility for all.

Too often, tragic deaths and serious crashes have occurred on several congested State roads in Rockville. We must do everything in our power to protect the lives of those who walk, bike, roll, and drive on roads in our city. HB 278 would help to improve traffic safety conditions on State roads by authorizing the reduction of the speed limit by 5 mph without a traffic study.

Reduced speed would create safer conditions at the intersection of Atlantic Avenue and MD 586 Veirs Mill Road, where a recent tragic pedestrian fatality occurred. This area is located along a portion of Veirs Mill Road in between Edmonston Drive and Twinbrook Parkway, which has also experienced five crashes with serious injuries between 2015-2023. It has a posted speed limit of 40 mph.

HB 278 would also reduce speed and enhance safety on MD 355 between Ridgemont Avenue to Watkins Pond Boulevard, where the posted speed limit is 40 mph. This section of roadway experienced eleven crashes with serious injuries between 2015-2023.

According to the Federal Highway Administration, studies clearly show that higher speeds result in greater impact at the time of a crash, which leads to more severe injuries and fatalities. By lowering speed limits on State roads, HB 278 would provide an important safeguard for those who walk, bike, roll, and drive on State roads in Rockville. For these reasons we urge the Committee to provide HB 278 with a favorable report. Thank You.