

March 5, 2024

Hon. Marc Korman, Chair  
Environment and Transportation Committee  
House Office Building  
Maryland General Assembly  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Position: **Support** with amendment: HB 193 – Anne Arundel County -- Speed Limits – Establishment

Dear Chair Korman:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading non-profit organization in the D.C. region, including suburban Maryland, advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We would like to express our support for House Bill 193. We agree with the bill's intention to give local authorities the option to evaluate and lower speed limits on highways. Highways have a diversity of users, including people walking, biking, pushing strollers, using a wheelchair, waiting for the bus, and driving cars and trucks. The design speed and the posted speed limit are often too high, and do not sufficiently accommodate the safety and access needs of different users. Drivers operating vehicles at high speeds pose a grave danger to people. Collisions often result in severe injury and death. Recent years have been the deadliest for people walking in decades. According to [Dangerous by Design](#), "the four most recent years on record (2016-2019) are the most deadly years for pedestrian deaths since 1990."

We wish to recommend the following amendment to balance the judicious use of automated traffic enforcement with other concerns on lower speed roadways:

(iii) A local authority may not implement a new speed monitoring system to enforce speed limits on any portion of a highway for which the speed limit has been decreased under this paragraph TO LESS THAN 25 MILES PER HOUR.

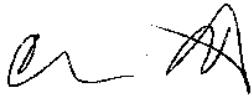
Page Two

CSG support with amendments for HB 193

This bill enables local authorities to assess and change the speed limit to a more appropriate vehicle speed based on local context and need to better balance safety and access for different users of a highway. Posted speed limits, along with clear signage, equitable enforcement, other deterrence measures, and most importantly, redesigning a roadway to a lower design speed, are all tools to ensure safe use of Maryland's public rights of way. This bill supports SHA's "context driven" approach and Vision Zero goals for state roads. Lower speed roadways are fundamental to creating safer conditions for all travelers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cort  
Policy Director