

February 8, 2024

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – HB 298 – Vehicle Laws – Lanes of Travel – Slower Traffic and Overtaking and Passing (MOVE GET OUT THE WAY Act)

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following information for the Committee's consideration on House Bill 298.

House Bill 298 expands, to all Maryland roadways, the requirement for a vehicle traveling slower than the general speed of traffic to drive in right-hand travel lanes. Further, the bill 1) requires drivers to use the far-left lane only for overtaking and passing another vehicle when traveling on a road with three or more travel lanes for traffic moving in the same direction and a posted maximum speed limit of at least 55 miles per hour, subject to certain exceptions, and 2) establishes a fine structure for a violation of this provision.

Currently, the requirement to keep right is limited to interstate highways in rural areas, where road congestion is traditionally less of an issue and where there are fewer traffic patterns requiring left lane exits or alignments. Any positive outcomes of House Bill 298 would be hard to quantify, and violations of the requirements would be difficult to enforce in certain areas with more frequent congestion and complex traffic patterns.

Additionally, the State Highway Administration (SHA) must inform slower drivers of the requirement to keep right on interstates located in a rural area by placing and maintaining signs at regular intervals on appropriate highways and through the dynamic message sign system located throughout the State. If House Bill 298 were to pass, SHA would be required to make a significant investment in new signs throughout the State to inform slower drivers of the requirement to keep right. While the exact impact of this requirement depends on the number of applicable roadways and the number of new signs that would be required to effectively communicate this message, SHA estimates that approximately 1,000 signs would need to be installed at an approximate cost of \$500,000 for installation.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 298.

Respectfully submitted,

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