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Executive Nominations Committee

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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The Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

**SB 961 – Wicomico County – Vehicle Laws – Prohibition on Roadway
Solicitations**

Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Thank you Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the distinguished Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee for this opportunity to present Senate Bill 961 – Wicomico County – Vehicle Laws – Prohibition on Roadway Solicitations.

This local, enabling legislation would prohibit a person from standing in a roadway, median divider, or intersection to solicit money or donations of any kind from the occupant of a vehicle within Wicomico County. Senate Bill 961 is modeled after other local enabling bills that already have passed and are in effect in Carroll, Charles, Harford, and Washington counties (Transportation Article 21-507 (c).)

Solicitations in roadways pose various challenges and risks to the individuals engaging in this activity, the drivers on the road, the responding officers, and the surrounding community. Since January of 2022, the Salisbury Police Department has responded to 234 calls for service related to money solicitation, and almost all of these calls involved individuals standing too close or directly in active lanes of vehicular traffic. There have been instances where the solicitors placed themselves directly in front of an oncoming vehicle, and situations where students are placing themselves in danger by fundraising from the median strip.

Roadway solicitations have become an increasing public safety concern in Wicomico County, and prohibiting this action would allow our public safety officers to protect the public and assist those individuals who may need service due to poverty and homelessness.

This local bill is supported by Wicomico Public Schools, the Wicomico County Council, the Salisbury Police Department and Wicomico Sheriff's Office, and the City of Salisbury.

I thank you for your kind attention and consideration, and I respectfully request a favorable and very swift report on SB 961.