

Bill Number: HB 1335

**Scott D. Shellenberger, State's Attorney for Baltimore County
Support**

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SCOTT D. SHELLENBERGER,
STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY,
IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 1335
RECKLESS AND NEGLIGENT DRIVING – DEATH OF ANOTHER – MUST APPEAR
(SHERRY'S AND RYAN'S LAW)**

I write in support of House Bill 1335 that makes a traffic charge of negligent driving which results in the death of another a must appear offense.

It is a simple fact that all State's Attorneys know - traffic fatalities are often the most difficult cases to explain to family and friends about the limits of the criminal justice system. The automobile manslaughter case requirement of gross negligence sometimes does not fit certain traffic offenses even when it results in a death. Many times the most that can be charged is reckless or negligent driving.

Allowing a Defendant charged with this offense to pay from home imposes more pain on a victim's family. Making these offenses a "must appear" will give a surviving family a moment to feel some accountability and maybe even an apology.

House Bill 1335 is not raising the penalty, it is not changing the standard by which we have charged for decades, it is merely trying to give a grieving family a day in court.

I urge a favorable report.