



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 1111

DATE: March 6, 2024

SPONSOR: Delegate Wims

ASSIGNED TO: Judiciary

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (Sara.Morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT

Criminal Law – Reckless Endangerment – Use of Motor Vehicle

House Bill 1111 would repeal an inclusion for motor vehicles when it comes to conduct applicable to the crime of reckless endangerment. Montgomery County supports this bill.

Last October, Montgomery County Police Sgt. Patrick Kepp was seriously injured after being struck on I-270 by a reckless and aggressive driver who had repeatedly engaged in dangerous driving, including incidents where he operated his car at speeds well over 130 miles per hour. The Montgomery County Department of Police was familiar with the teenage driver. He had been issued multiple citations, but he continued to engage in aggressive driving. In the early morning hours of October 18th, after receiving another report of dangerous driving by the notorious teen, Sgt. Kepp responded to the incident by driving to the section of I-270 where the car had been headed and deployed stop sticks in the road to deflate the driver's tires. Instead of the driver slowing down to prevent a crash, he drove into Sgt. Kepp causing the police officer to sustain crushing injuries to his legs resulting in necessary amputation. The driver has been charged with attempted first-degree murder, first-degree assault, and causing life-threatening injuries to Sgt. Kepp.

The vehicle that struck Sgt. Kepp was being intentionally used by a driver as a deadly weapon. Operating at reckless and excessive speeds, the automobile was no different from a firearm that can be discharged and cause serious bodily injury or death to another. House Bill 1111 recognizes this and removes the exclusion of motor vehicles under the Criminal Law Article, § 3-204, addressing reckless endangerment.

Montgomery County urges the Committee to adopt a favorable report on HB 1111.