



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

HB 915

DATE: February 20, 2025

SPONSOR: Delegate Foley

ASSIGNED TO: Environment and Transportation

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

POSITION: Support with Amendment (Montgomery County Department of Police)

Motor Vehicles – Out-of-State Drivers – Enforcement (Out-of-State Driver Accountability Act)

House Bill 915 would authorize the Attorney General or State's Attorneys to bring civil actions against District of Columbia registered vehicle owners for unpaid and overdue traffic tickets accrued in Maryland. Detailed reporting containing information about each citation would be required to be conducted by counties and municipalities and submitted on a quarterly basis to the Maryland Highway Safety Office's (MHSO) Vision Zero coordinator. Montgomery County Department of Police (MCPD) supports this bill with an amendment to remove the MHSO reporting provision.

Last October, the District of Columbia passed the Strengthening Traffic Enforcement, Education and Responsibility Amendment Act of 2024 (STEER Act) ostensibly to enhance road safety following a reckless driving incident committed by a motorist with more than \$18,000 in unpaid traffic tickets. Under the law, the D.C. Attorney General's Office may sue out-of-state registered vehicle owners for unpaid or undue traffic citations.

Tickets issued through automated traffic enforcement are intended to serve as a deterrent to unsafe driving. If citations are flagrantly ignored, there is no desired effect. Last year, MCPD reported that there were 4,801 outstanding red-light camera citations, and 19,626 outstanding speed camera citations issued in Montgomery County to registered out-of-state drivers. Citations are routinely mailed to out-of-state residents. However, because there is no reciprocity to hold vehicle owners accountable, many tickets go unpaid.

With regard to quarterly reporting requirements by counties and municipalities to the Maryland Highway Safety Office's Vision Zero coordinator, MCPD urges that an amendment be considered to remove this provision. MHSO is not a law enforcement entity. As such, these detailed reports documenting unpaid citations issued to out-of-state drivers would seem to be of little value.

It is with deterrence and public safety in mind, that MCPD urges the Committee adopt a favorable report on House Bill 915 with the suggested amendment.