



**PLEASE SUPPORT
HB 0744**

“Motor Vehicles - Reckless,
Negligent, and Aggressive Driving”

**MARYLAND COALITION FOR ROADWAY SAFETY, INC.
URGES MD HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE SUPPORT FOR HB 0744**

February 11, 2025

TO:

Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Delegate Regina T. Boyce, Vice Chair
250 & 251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

FROM:

John Seng, Chair
SafeRoadsMD - Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.
(202) 468-7682, JSeng@SafeRoadsMD.org
SafeRoadsMD.org

Subject: Urgent Need for Stronger Enforcement Against Distracted Driving – Support HB 0744

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee:

On behalf of SafeRoadsMD, I write to strongly encourage a **favorable review of House Bill 0744 (HB 0744)**, a vital new instrument of legislation aimed at **strengthening Maryland’s traffic laws to prevent reckless, negligent, and aggressive driving.**

This bill builds upon last year’s efforts to address the **devastating injuries suffered by Montgomery County Police Sgt. Patrick Kepp**, who was struck by a driver engaging in **criminally reckless behavior** in 2023. While previous legislation sought to tackle this issue, **HB 0744 is a refined and technically superior version** that enhances **accountability, enforcement, and road safety for all Marylanders.**



Sgt. Patrick Kepp’s prosthetic legs (WUSA9)

The Urgency of HB 0744

As incidents of reckless, negligent, and aggressive driving continue to rise, Maryland must take a strong stance against dangerous behaviors that endanger motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. HB 0744 takes a necessary and major step toward stronger enforcement and deterrence by updating and expanding Maryland's traffic laws to make our roads safer.

This bill ensures that reckless drivers face real consequences while giving law enforcement the tools they need to address dangerous driving before it results in injury or loss of life.

Key Provisions of House Bill 0744

1. Enhanced Penalties and Points System

HB 0744 **increases penalties and point assessments** to deter reckless driving and hold violators accountable:

- **Negligent driving** will now result in **2 points** on a driver's record.
- **Speeding 30 mph or more over the posted limit** will result in **6 points**.
- **Reckless driving penalties increased to:**
 - **Up to 60 days in jail** and/or a **\$1,000 fine**.
- **Negligent driving fines** will increase to **\$750**.
- **Aggressive driving fines** will increase to **\$1,000**.

These increases reflect the serious nature of reckless and aggressive driving behaviors, ensuring that offenders face appropriate consequences for endangering public safety.

2. Expanded Definitions of Reckless and Aggressive Driving

HB 0744 broadens the legal definitions of reckless and aggressive driving to cover more dangerous behaviors:

- **Reckless driving** now explicitly includes:
 - **Excessive speeding (30+ mph over the limit)** as an indicator of reckless intent.
- **Aggressive driving charges** will now apply when a driver commits **two or more (previously three) dangerous violations**, making it easier to **identify and penalize dangerous drivers** before they cause harm.
- The list of **violations qualifying as aggressive driving** has been expanded to include:
 - **Failure to stop for a pedestrian in a crosswalk.**
 - **Passing a stopped school bus with flashing red lights.**
 - **Unsafe lane changes and weaving between lanes.**

- **Tailgating and failing to yield the right-of-way.**
- **Skidding, spinning wheels, or excessive noise.**
- **Discharging diesel emissions onto another vehicle (“rolling coal”).**
- **Motorcycles passing in the same lane or riding between lanes of traffic.**

By lowering the threshold for aggressive driving charges and expanding the list of offenses, this bill ensures that Maryland’s traffic laws reflect the modern dangers of reckless driving.

Why This Bill Matters

Maryland’s current penalties are not enough to deter dangerous driving behaviors, and law enforcement challenges leave reckless drivers unaccountable. HB 0744 strengthens Maryland’s commitment to road safety by providing clearer definitions, increased penalties, and a stronger framework for enforcement.

The impact of HB 0744 will be significant, resulting in:

- **Fewer accidents and fatalities** caused by reckless and aggressive driving.
- **Increased accountability** for dangerous drivers.
- **Safer roads for all Marylanders**, including **pedestrians, cyclists, and responsible motorists**—our **families, friends, and neighbors**.

Furthermore, HB 0744 is a necessary response to real-world tragedies. MCP Sgt. Patrick Kepp’s injuries in 2023 serve as a stark reminder of the devastating consequences of reckless driving. This bill made into law will deter people who would otherwise engage in reckless behavior on public roads.

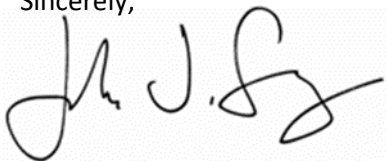
A Call to Action – Please Support HB 0744 for Safer Roads

The **Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety** urges you to support HB 0744 and take decisive action to make Maryland’s roads safer for everyone. Reckless driving is not just a traffic violation—it is a life-threatening danger that affects thousands of families every year. By passing HB 0744, Maryland will send a clear message: reckless, negligent, and aggressive driving will not be tolerated.

We appreciate your time and commitment to making Maryland a safer place for all who travel or attempt to cross our roads.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration.

Sincerely,



John J. Seng
Chair
Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.

cc: SafeRoadsMD Board, S. Morningstar - Montgomery County Office of Intergovernmental Relations