

January 31, 2025  
The Honorable Barry Beauchamp  
310 Lowe House Office Building  
6 Bladen Street, Office 310  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Delegate Beauchamp,

As the Chief of Police at Salisbury University, I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 320, which seeks to prohibit individuals in Wicomico County from standing in roadways, median dividers, or intersections to solicit money or donations from vehicle occupants. This legislation is crucial for enhancing public safety, particularly in areas surrounding our university campus.

High-traffic areas near the University have become common sites for roadway solicitation. Individuals engaging in this practice often come into close contact with students commuting to and from campus. This proximity raises significant safety concerns, including traffic hazards, whereby solicitors standing in or near roadways can distract drivers and inadvertently cause accidents. The presence of pedestrians in the roadways soliciting money in these areas increases the risk of vehicle-pedestrian collisions, endangering both solicitors and motorists.

The personal safety of our students is our number one priority. Students may feel uncomfortable or threatened when approached by solicitors, especially during evening hours. This can lead to avoidance behaviors, such as taking longer routes, which may expose them to other risks.

House Bill 320 aligns Wicomico County with other Maryland counties that have implemented similar measures to protect public safety. This legislation will help reduce the potential for accidents and enhance the overall security of our community.

I ask the House to give favorable consideration to House Bill 320. Enacting this bill will contribute to the safety and well-being of Salisbury University students and the broader Wicomico County community.

Sincerely,

Edwin Lashley  
Chief of Police