



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**HB 744**

**DATE: February 13, 2025**

**SPONSOR: Delegate Wims, et al.**

**ASSIGNED TO: Environment and Transportation**

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

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

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### **Motor Vehicles – Reckless, Negligent, and Aggressive Driving**

House Bill 744 would increase the penalties and points assessed for reckless, negligent, and aggressive driving offenses. The bill defines reckless driving as traveling at a speed of at least 30 miles per hour above the posted speed limit. Additionally, the bill would reduce from three to two the number of aggressive driving offenses committed at the same time or during a single and continuous period of driving by a motorist (including motorcycles) and increase the number of specific actions considered as aggressive driving offenses. Montgomery County supports House Bill 744.

In 2023, 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 Police Department 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 18, 2023, 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.

This should not have happened. Stronger State laws need to be in place to keep dangerous drivers off the roads. And for individuals who willfully violate State traffic laws – and intentionally endanger public safety – consequential penalties should be available in the prosecutions of those drivers. Montgomery County urges the Committee to adopt a favorable report on House Bill 744.