

Written Testimony for **HB 234**: **Vehicle Laws - Injury or Death of Vulnerable Individual - Penalties** - Please **VOTE NO** on this bill as it is written.

Dear Environment and Transportation Committee:

This bill reads "...An individual convicted of a violation of subsection (b) of this section is subject to IMPRISONMENT NOT EXCEEDING 2 MONTHS OR a fine not exceeding \$2,000 OR BOTH. In addition to the penalties provided under subsection (c) of this section, the court may order an individual convicted of a violation of subsection (b) of this section to: Participate in a motor vehicle safety course; and Perform up to 150 hours of community service. The Administration shall suspend the driver's license of an individual convicted of a violation of subsection (b) of this section for at least 7 days but not more than 6 months..."

I appreciate the fact that Delegate Stein added a penalty for imprisonment in addition to the penalty of a fine for this infraction. However, I do not think that the penalties are strict enough for this particular infraction. Under this bill, if it becomes a law, a person convicted of killing or seriously injuring, say, a child on a bicycle or an elderly or disabled person in a wheelchair is only going to be **imprisoned for no more than 2 months, only pay a fine not exceeding \$2,000.00, participate in a motor vehicle safety course, only perform no more than 150 hours of community service, and only have their driver's license suspended for between one week and no more than 6 months?** That's it?!! For killing for basically maiming another innocent person?!!

According to 2024 Maryland Statutes Criminal Law, Title 2 - Homicide, Subtitle 2 - Murder and Manslaughter, Section 2-210 - **Manslaughter by Vehicle** or Vessel -- Criminal Negligence, "...a person who violates this section is guilty of a misdemeanor and on **conviction** is subject to **imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or a fine not exceeding \$5,000 or both.**

"...A person who violates this section, **having previously been convicted** under this section, § 2-209, § 2-503, § 2-504, § 2-505, § 2-506, or § 3-211 of this article, or § 21-902 of the Transportation Article, is guilty of a felony and on **conviction** is subject to **imprisonment not exceeding 5 years or a fine not exceeding \$10,000 or both.**

So, a person can kill a "vulnerable person" under **this bill** and receive **no more than 2 months in prison and only pay a fine not exceeding \$2,000.00 and only have their driver's license suspended for between one week and no more than 6**

**months?** There is a **vast** difference **between** the penalties under **this bill** and the penalties for **Manslaughter by Vehicle**, yet the actions are the same: killing an innocent person. This makes no sense!!

Unless the penalties for conviction under this bill are increased to be commensurate with the penalties for **Manslaughter by Vehicle**, then I would respectfully request that everyone on this Committee **VOTE NO** on this bill.

Thank you for your courtesy, cooperation and attention.

Respectfully,

Trudy Tibbals, A Very Concerned Mother of 3 and Maryland resident