

# **HB1533-ET-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**HB 1533**

March 12, 2025

**TO:** Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 1533 – Motor Vehicle Administration Records - Access to Digital Photographic Images and Signatures - Baltimore City

**POSITION:** Support

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports House Bill (HB) 1533.

HB 1533 will provide better access to MVA photos for Baltimore City's Special Investigations Unit (SIU) within the Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD). This legislation will decrease the amount of time it takes to obtain a photo through the MVA which will aid in the identification of illegal dumpers.

Baltimore City routinely receives over 15,000 service requests per year specific to illegal dumping and over 20,000 additional complaints for other sanitation related issues. Baltimore City's SIU, who are charged with investigating illegal dumping, currently have access to MVA driver and vehicle records. These are utilized for investigative purposes to identify individuals and vehicles used in illegal dumping as well as locating individuals, estates, landlords, and agents associated with properties DHCD is seeking to investigate and/or serve. However, our investigators currently need to put in a request through the Baltimore City Police Department (BPD) to obtain a photo which can cause significant delays.

SIU is unable to review the MVA driver's license photos per a specific provision of MD Transportation Article specifying sharing of digital photos. Trans., § 12-111(b)(6). "The Administration may make a digital photographic image or signature of an individual, or the actual stored data thereof, recorded by the Administration available to: (i) The courts; (ii) Criminal justice agencies; (iii) Driver license authorities; (iv) The individual; (v) The individual's attorney; (vi) Third parties designated by the individual; and (vii) The Child Support Administration."

This legislation would clarify that, for purposes of this section, DHCD/SIU is deemed a "criminal justice agency" that can receive photo images. By including the Special Investigations Unit of the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development or its successor, as a "criminal justice agency" we will be able to more effectively access MVA photos to assist Investigators in identifying suspects in illegal dumping cases, as well as positively identifying individuals being served subpoenas for upcoming DHCD court hearings.

As an example, we had a single individual dump on nine separate occasions over a four-month period. It wasn't until after the eighth dumping that we obtained the MVA photo and were able to identify him and file the criminal charges. He dumped the ninth time on the same day that charges were filed for the first eight cases. In our experience once a dumper has been identified and contacted they curb their behavior.

Being able to quickly identify dumpers and get in contact with them will significantly decrease illegal dumping in Baltimore. Having access to MVA photos will greatly assist in identifying the dumpers in a timely manor.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 1533.

# **HB1533 - MVA - LOI - Motor Vehicle Administration**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

March 12, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
251 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 1533 – Motor Vehicle Administration Records -  
Access to Digital Photographic Images and Signatures - Baltimore City***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1533 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

HB 1533 requires the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration to provide access to certain records to the Special Investigations Unit of the Baltimore City Department of Housing and Community Development.

Under the Maryland Public Information Act<sup>1</sup> and Article - Transportation §12-111(b)(5) and (6), photos and signatures are considered "personal information" and are not disclosable as public records, subject to limited exceptions.<sup>2</sup> These exceptions follow a secure process to apply for access to this information and must be pre-approved. Expanding access to additional local jurisdictional agencies may lead to further encroachment by other jurisdictions. Broad disclosure presents additional risks for the individuals whose photos are retrieved, though existing protocols are in place to attempt to mitigate that risk.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1533.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer  
Administrator  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
410-787-7830

Matthew Mickler  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090

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<sup>1</sup> See GP §4-101.

<sup>2</sup> Those exceptions allowing disclosure can be divided into three primary categories: disclosure to criminal justice agencies, to the individual and their designees, and for child support enforcement.