



191 Main Street, Suite 310 – Annapolis MD 21401 – 410-268-6871

February 10, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 551 Private Passenger Motor Vehicle Insurance - Premium Increases - Collisions With Wild Animals – UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee,

We are writing to respectfully request an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 551, a bill that would prohibit the longstanding use of a legitimate rating factor in automobile insurance.

MAMIC is comprised of 12 mutual insurance companies that are headquartered in Maryland and neighboring states. Approximately one-half of our members are domiciled in Maryland, and are key contributors and employers in our local communities. Together, MAMIC members offer a wide variety of insurance products and services and provide coverage for thousands of Maryland citizens.

The Maryland Insurance Administration has, among its primary duties, the obligation to review the rating practices of insurers to guarantee compliance with both State insurance statutes and other applicable laws. In automobile insurance, the collision of a vehicle with another object, whether that object is, for example, another vehicle, a fixed object such as a tree, or a deer, may give rise to a permissible rating factor under conditions established by the MIA. The MIA is responsible for overseeing the use of all such rating factors by insurers. Traditionally, the General Assembly has consulted with the MIA on such matters and followed its advice.

The use of such rating factors ensures fairness of automobile insurance rates across the *entire insured population*. We note that the MIA has not, to our knowledge, recommended to the General Assembly that it should prohibit a rating factor based on collision with a deer (or any wild animal).

MAMIC also notes, for the Committee's consideration, the introduction of [Senate Bill 635](#). Although this bill has been referred to the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee, it provides a better alternative to the remedy found in Senate Bill 551 of requiring other policyholders to subsize losses from wild animal collisions. Instead, Senate Bill 635 places its focus on prevention. For example, the use of fencing to prevent wild animals from crossing roads has been described by the [Humane Society of the United States](#) as "one of the most successful techniques for alleviating animal vehicle collisions."

MAMIC urges the Committee to consider such measures rather than requiring the majority of automobile insurance policyholders – those who have no losses – to subsidize those who do.

For these reasons, we respectfully request an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 551. Thank you for your consideration of our views on this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Jeane A. Peters".

Jeane A. Peters, President

cc: The Honorable Jack Bailey
Bryson F. Popham