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MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Education, Business and  
Administration Subcommittee

Pensions Subcommittee

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Audit and Evaluation Committee

Children, Youth, and Families

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**Testimony of Senator Joanne C. Benson**  
**SB559**  
**Transportation Study on Speed-Limits-Interstate 495, and**  
**Connected Highways**

Good afternoon, Chair Pamela Beidle, Vice Chair Antonio Hayes, and Esteemed member of the Finance Committee. I am here today to express my strong support for a transportation study on Speed Limits-Interstate 495, and Connected Highways.

This bill aims to ensure the safety of drivers as they travel on Maryland highways. With over 260,000 people getting stuck in traffic on I-495 every day and merging congestion leading to accidents on major state highways, it is important to consider consistent highway speed levels to reduce traffic problems and accidents.

In Maryland, there is an average of 110,000 car crashes per year, and this bill aims to help reduce that number. We must help the drivers within Maryland reduce the impacts of merging between the various State highways.

Under this legislation, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) will conduct a Comprehensive study on the effects of speed limit changes on highways in the state that connect to I-495.

MDOT will consult with local officials and stakeholders who have expertise in traffic safety issues to gather insights on the prevalence of accidents, traffic congestion, and existing speed limits on these highways over the past five years.

By analyzing this data, we can develop an effective solution to address the concerns of drivers traveling through Maryland. With this study being enacted we would have the knowledge to tackle and address the speeding and traffic problems of the great State of Maryland. If enacted, this bill will provide the knowledge needed to create a plan that ensures the safety of all Maryland drivers.

Therefore, I strongly urge the committee for a favorable report on SB559. Thank you for your time and consideration.