

## **Introduction:**

My name is Shirelle Yvette Green; I am a lifelong resident of Prince George's County, and I am the mother of Matéo Isaiah Green. It is with a mending heart, and a forever changed life that I am writing this letter on behalf of Matéo's family, in support of the proposed law change entitled, Matéo's Law (SB0565)

## **The Problem:**

On April 6, 2024, our only son/brother Matéo, suffered a traumatic brain injury following a one car crash in which he was the rear seat passenger. Matéo, who had just turned 23, two weeks before the crash was the only fatality; there were two additional passengers who also suffered major injuries. We have since learned that the driver's blood alcohol level was twice the legal limit. As our family is navigating our experience with the judicial system, we have come to understand that the current law in Maryland states that when there is a crash that results in injury or death, it only if the officer believes there are reasonable grounds for testing, that breathalyzer testing is performed at the scene. It is our opinion that allowing this vital testing to be left to the digression of the Officer *could*, in a worst-case scenario, be prompted or delayed by racial or ethnic discrimination. Additionally, delaying testing delays the judicial process for the offender allowing him/her to enjoy their freedom while families are left to deal with the aftermath of their decision to drive drunk, it also allows him/her to continue driving and possibly injure or kill again. Just a few weeks after losing our son, a friend of the family lost his cousin. She too was a passenger in a drunk driver crash. Her offender was not tested and remains free.

## **How The Bill Will Solve It**

Our proposed change to Section 16-205.1 will replace the current section of the Maryland law allowing for an Officer to determine if reasonable grounds exist so that if a driver is involved in a crash that results in the death of, or life-threatening injury to another person, the driver will be required to submit, as directed by a police officer, to a test immediately. These changes will remove the gray area and potential for bias that currently allows onsite testing only if the Officer determines there are reasonable grounds. It is our hope that by initiating immediate, on the scene testing, the justice process will move more swiftly for the offender AND families suffering this type of unnecessary loss.

## **Call to Action**

We whole-heartedly support this Bill as we hope to seek justice for Matéo and those who may have to experience this type of loss. It is with great hope that we submit this statement and request your support in favor of this Bill.

Respectfully,

Gregorio, Shirelle and Christen Green  
Family of Matéo Isaiah Green



**Bryna Clark-Braverman**  
**Executive Director**  
**MADD Maryland**  
**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**  
**January 29, 2025**

I am writing today in strong support of Mateo's Law (SB565), which would require law enforcement officers to immediately draw blood to test the blood alcohol content (BAC) of drivers involved in single-car crashes that result in death or life-threatening injury at the scene of the crash. This critical measure will ensure that justice is served, protect public safety, and close a dangerous gap in our current legal system.

Currently, there is no requirement for officers to perform immediate BAC testing in single-car crashes, leaving room for intoxicated drivers to avoid accountability. This delay in testing allows alcohol to metabolize, making it difficult—if not impossible—to determine the driver's level of impairment at the time of the crash. Mateo's Law will ensure that law enforcement collects accurate and timely evidence, strengthening the ability of prosecutors to hold impaired drivers responsible.

Every year, far too many families are devastated by drunk driving crashes. While existing DUI laws penalize intoxicated drivers in multi-vehicle crashes, those who cause single-car crashes resulting in serious injury or death can sometimes escape justice due to a lack of immediate testing. By mandating on-scene BAC testing in such cases, Mateo's Law will deter reckless behavior and reinforce the message that driving under the influence will not be tolerated.

Mateo's Law is named in honor of a young life lost due to the failures of the current system. The tragedy that Mateo's family endured should never happen to another family. This law will ensure that those responsible for life-altering crashes are held accountable, bringing much-needed closure to victims' families and strengthening trust in our legal system.

I urge this committee to pass Mateo's Law (SB565) and take a firm stand against impaired driving. The implementation of this law will save lives, provide justice for victims, and make our roads safer for everyone.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**Introduction:**

My Name is Kevin Jiggetts, a U.S. Marine Vet, Purple Heart recipient, former Corrections Officer, Shirelle Green's sibling and Matéo's uncle.

**The Problem:**

Please allow the following true stories to remind us that "Driving While Impaired" is a serious offense and the importance of accountability.

*(UPI Archived)* WASHINGTON – "A man whose car plowed into a crowded bus stop, killing a family of five and two others outside the Washington Navy Yard, **had been drinking**. The driver, (name redacted), 41, of Washington, was **charged** with seven counts of vehicular homicide, driving under the influence of alcohol and reckless driving in Saturday's accident. "... **police said**. ...his blood alcohol level was found to have been more than .10 percent." The judicial proceedings thereafter, held him accountable.

On the night of January 31, 2005, I was pulled over and **arrested** for suspicion of **drunk driving** (in the DMV). Fortunately, there was no accident and thank God, no fatalities. **Police report** my blood alcohol level at (redacted). However, the night in jail, the subsequent court appearances, fines, and suspensions, were to remind me of the seriousness of my reckless behavior." The judicial proceedings thereafter, held me accountable.

**How the Bill Will Solve It:**

Learning that the driver's, in Mateo's case, blood alcohol content was double the legal limit, is a moot point after the fact and allow for outdated/antiquated laws coupled with poor discretions to diminish accountability.

We live in an age of fact checking and almost instant results on most things and I can't think of a more necessary cause to immediately administer a drug and/or alcohol test, than that of a fatal accident. That is not a time for the onsite officers to make a discretionary call as I understand that under current Maryland law, an officer needs to "*believe there is reasonable grounds*" for testing.

**Call to Action:**

Mateo's Law is easily one of the most important laws for consideration in 2025. It allows for some emotional closure and restores a little faith in an already broken justice system.

With respect, in your position(s) as administrators of law, what if it were you? What if it were your loved one? Your son, your daughter? What if it were you having to suffer all of those horrific events/moments/tears for the rest of your life? What would be the first thing on your agenda when you returned to the office?

Submitted on behalf of my beloved and heartbroken sister and her family.

Kevin Jiggetts

**Introduction:** For the record, I am Donna Carter, a resident in Prince Georges County and I am writing in support of a proposed law change that will require testing for impaired driving in the case of a motor vehicle accident that results in the death of, or a life-threatening injury to another person. I understand that this law will be known as Mateo's Law.

**The Problem:** Currently, when a car accident occurs that results in bodily injury and/or death of another person, the responding officer has the discretion to require of the driver, immediate breath and/or blood testing for impaired driving or not. Application of said discretion is not restricted to situations in which to do so would delay or prevent medical attention required for injured passengers and in fact deciding not to test at the scene may be determined to be gender or ethnic discrimination. Additionally, the decision not to test at the scene may also delay the removal of access to legally continue driving by said driver. Lastly, the lack of proof of impairment at the scene may also have the unfortunate result of delayed justice for the families of the injured passengers and/or those passengers that lost their lives as a result of the drug or alcohol impairment of the driver responsible.

**How the Bill Will Solve It:** The proposed change will replace the current Maryland law allowing for an Officer to determine if reasonable grounds exist, thereby removing the possibility of gender ethnic and/or other forms of discrimination in the application of the law by removing the gray area that currently allows onsite testing only if the Officer determines reasonable grounds. Additionally, by initiating immediate, at the scene of the accident, both breath and blood alcohol content testing, such drivers will more quickly lose their access to drive legally and the justice process will move more swiftly for families suffering this type of loss.

**Call to Action:** In conclusion, I humbly pray that you will support the proposed modification to existing legislation thereby requiring any person involved in a motor vehicle accident that results in the death of, or a life-threatening injury to, another person to submit to breath and blood testing for impaired driving. Thank you,

**Introduction:** I am Sheneer Roberts, resident of Ann Arundel County, and friend of the Green family over 30 years. I have known Matéo all of his life, and am devastated at his untimely passing at the hands of a drunk driver. I am writing in support of the modification of law that will require a Field Sobriety Tests in the case any motor vehicle accident particularly those that results in the death, critical or life-threatening injury to another person. The law proposed is Matéo's Law, Bill Number: SB0565.

**The Problem:** Presently, at the scene of a vehicle accident, the responding officer has the discretion to require a Field Sobriety or Blood Test for impaired driving or not. A Field Sobriety or Blood Test should not be left up to the discretion of an officer. Discretion of the officer is liable to be determined based on bias gender or ethnic discrimination. The lack of confirmation of impairment at the scene could cause unfortunate results of delayed justice for the families of the injured passengers and or those passengers that lost their lives as a result of the impaired driver responsible.

**How the Bill Will Solve It:** This proposed change in law will replace the current Maryland law allowing an officer to determine if reasonable grounds exist to perform a Field Sobriety Test on the scene of an accident. This change will remove the bias of an officer to make life or death determinations with Matéo's Law, Bill Number: SB0565 in place.

**Call of Action:** The proposed modification to the existing legislation requiring any person involved in a motor vehicle accident that results in the death of, or a life-threatening injury to, another person to not have a choice and submit to a Field Sobriety or Blood testing for impaired driving. Impaired driving hurts everyone!

Thank you.