



AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in Support of SB 44
Reckless and Negligent Driving - Death of Another - Must-Appear Violation
(Sherry's and Christian's Law)

Sponsors: Senators Carozza et al

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **supports** SB 44, which requires anyone who causes the death of another as a result of reckless or negligent driving to appear in court.
- Over the years, we have seen countless cases where drivers who caused fatal crashes in Maryland received a slap on the wrist and paid a fine without ever appearing in court.
- One such [crash involved](#) a young, distracted driver who crossed the yellow line on a Maryland road in Northern Baltimore County crashing into another vehicle, killing the driver, 61-year old Charles "Chuck" Stoecker, in November 2007.
- The driver, Brandon Michael Boehmer did not have to appear in court for his violation. He was issued tickets, which resulted in six points and paid a \$410 fine. He did not face a trial.
- We saw this again in a [high-profile crash in August 2008](#) that involved a driver who fell asleep while crossing the Bay Bridge, causing a fatal crash that sent a tractor trailer plunging into the water and claimed the life of the truck driver, John R. Short, Sr.
- The driver who was charged with causing the crash, Candy Lynn Baldwin, also did not have to appear in court for her violations. Ms. Baldwin merely paid \$470 in fines to settle the tickets.
- There was no opportunity for the families of Chuck Stoecker and John Short to have their day in court to express their grievances face-to-face with the drivers who caused the deaths of their loved ones and before a judge.
- Deadly crashes should not be treated the same as non-life threatening crashes. It should be mandatory that drivers involved in crashes that result in death appear in court and not be treated as conveniently as a simple traffic citation.
- In 2023, there were 577 fatal crashes in Maryland, according to the [MDOT MVA Highway Safety Office](#), resulting in 621 deaths. Speed was a factor in 102 of those fatalities and an aggressive driver was involved in 62 of those deaths. (Source: [MDOT MVA Highway Safety Office, data as of January 20, 2025](#))
- Victims' families should be afforded the opportunity to have their day in court, too, for a tragedy that will affect them for the rest of their lives.
- AAA Mid-Atlantic supports **SB 44** and respectfully urges the Committee to render a favorable report.

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