

CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

<u>Support Senate Bill 618</u> – Vehicle Laws - Licenses, Identification Cards, and Moped Operator's Permits - Notation of Nonapparent Disability Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee February 13, 2025

The City of Takoma Park supports and urges favorable consideration of Senate Bill 618, which ensures that individuals with non-apparent disabilities have a special identifier on their license or identification card.

The City of Takoma Park is a "Community of Belonging" in which everyone from all walks of life is welcomed. People with non-apparent disabilities play a crucial role in our society, bringing unique perspectives and talents that enrich our community. Their inclusion fosters diversity and promotes a culture of empathy and understanding. This inclusive approach helps break down barriers, reduces stigma, and encourages a more compassionate and equitable world for all.

SB 618 is a critical step towards ensuring the safety and independence of residents with non-apparent disabilities within the City of Takoma Park. This bill requires that licenses, identification cards, or moped operator's permits have an identifying marker which notifies law enforcement officers of the person's special needs. This identifier is important as it will provide police officers and other first responders with critical information to inform their response approach.

We have heard firsthand from parents of adult children with special needs how important it is for their children to have independence but as importantly a safe interaction with the police should one occur. This is why this bill is important.

The City of Takoma Park supports SB 618 and urges a favorable committee vote.