



AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in SUPPORT of HB 1375 - Vehicle Equipment - Portable Variable Messaging Signs Sponsor: Delegate Stein

- AAA Mid-Atlantic supports **HB 1375 - Vehicle Equipment - Portable Variable Messaging Signs**, authorizing a tow truck to display a portable variable messaging sign (VMS), mounted on the tow truck while at the scene of a crash or a disabled vehicle.
- These signs can display arrows or safety messages to warn drivers of dangerous situations along Maryland roadways, protecting drivers and those on the roadside.
- Data analyzed by the [AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety](#) found that nearly 2,000 people were killed outside of a vehicle in roadside crashes over the 5-year period from 2017 to 2021.
- Researchers also identified 123 roadside assistance providers who had been killed by passing vehicles between 2015 and 2021, with 63% occurring when it was dark.
- The AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety evaluated the effectiveness of vehicle-mounted variable message signs (VMS) in promoting safer behaviors in passing motorists and found that when variable message signs (VMS) were active:
 - Drivers were more likely to move over and slow down.
 - The odds of a vehicle moving over when VMS was active was 95%.
 - Active VMS had a greater impact on speed reductions in the lane nearest the vehicle.
 - Passenger vehicles were more responsive to VMS use than trucks or buses (although both vehicle types are more likely to move over when VMS is active compared to when not).
 - If a vehicle was making a lane change, its speed also tended to be lower than those who stayed in a lane (i.e., borrowing from the slogan, they would “slow down” and “move over”).
 - The results imply that using VMS can positively impact traffic, especially passenger vehicles.
- Variable Messaging Signs are already in use by state agencies, and will help save the lives of motorists and tow truck drivers at the side of the road, by alerting approaching drivers, well in advance of the presence of a tow truck, and often times another driver ahead.
- Virginia just passed similar legislation, which was unanimously supported in both the House and the Senate, and signed into law by Governor Youngkin this week.
- This life-saving signage will help drivers comply with Maryland's Move Over laws, as well.
- We respectfully urge the Committee to give **HB 1375** a favorable report.

Contacts:

*Ragina C. Ali, AAA Mid-Atlantic
Public and Government Affairs Manager
443.465.5020*

*Sherrie Sims, GS Proctor & Associates
Senior Associate
410.733.7171*

Help save lives by commanding safe behavior from the motoring public.



The 3-in-1 SafeAll Traffic Commander

Did you know you can change how you drive before you drive? Get more done for your dollars with the flexibility of Backup Message Boards. The LED lights and their colors will help direct traffic away from your multiple work zones.



A message board.



An arrow stick.



A light bar.



EXAMPLES OF VMS IN USE