

# **Copy of Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 292.pd**

Uploaded by: Anita Lampel

Position: FAV

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 292  
Motor Vehicles—Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence

My name is Anita Lampel. I am a resident of Bethesda in District 16. I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill 292, Motor Vehicles-Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence. I want to thank Senator Sydnor for introducing this.

I am a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation and of the Women's Democratic Club. I am submitting testimony on my own behalf today. My personal experience raising my children in a city with a racially diverse and economically deprived community where I ran a Child and Adolescent Mental Health Clinic and also testified in Court on numerous occasions has given me a perspective on what I consider to be “crimes of poverty” and how we can act to improve or worsen the lives of the poor. By a crime of poverty, I mean people who cannot pay the registration for the car or fix a turn-signal because a child has been ill or their rent increased. This bill addresses crimes of poverty like broken windshields and lapsed registration. This bill also addresses “styles” which, while possibly not legal, are not in and of themselves a danger—such as an object dangling from the rear view mirror. White-appearing people with nice cars don’t get the same treatment.

Police have a lot to do to investigate and prevent SERIOUS crimes. Reckless driving, driving under the influence, speeding— all these create a risk of accidents, injuries and death. These other areas could just be handled with a photograph of the license plate and a fix-it ticket mailed to the owner requiring only demonstration that the issue had been addressed with no further fine. The police would not need to pull someone over, itself a potential driving hazard and a situation which research shows causes the police officer stress,, and WASTE TIME issuing a ticket. In police jurisdictions which have introduced this type of legislation, the result has been improved public safety in part because officers have more time to ticket reckless driving of all sorts. Others have provided you with this irrefutable evidence.

I urge the committee to vote in favor of this bill to improve public safety and eliminate targeting specific groups of drivers.

Thank you,  
Anita Lampel

# **Testimony for the Senate Judiciary Proceedings 1-2**

Uploaded by: Beverly John

Position: FAV

**Testimony for Senate Judicial Proceedings**  
**Tuesday, January 28, 2025**  
**SB292 – Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**  
**FAVORABLE**

Dear Honorable Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and committee members:

My name is Beverly John. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of my family and community. I am a concerned community member, as well as a member of the Maryland Coalition for Justice and Police Accountability and the Prince George's County Coalition for Police Accountability.

It is my understanding that the goal of this legislation is to decrease the number of traffic stops for low-level infractions. Unfortunately, we have experienced too many traffic stops turn into serious physical, psychological and economic harm to our communities, especially in over-policed Black and Hispanic neighborhoods. Statistics show that Black and Hispanic drivers are searched approximately twice as often as white drivers which increases the possibility of unwarranted use of force violations.

Additionally, limiting non-safety related stops would allow police to spend more time to focus on dangerous driving and serious crime, increasing public safety. Therefore, we urge a "favorable" vote on SB292.

Thank you.

# **2025 Testimony on SB 292 FAV Cichowski.pdf**

Uploaded by: Carol Cichowski

Position: FAV

**Senate Bill 292**  
**Motor Vehicles-Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**  
**Judicial Proceedings Committee – January 28, 2025**  
**FAVORABLE**

**Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony in support of Senate Bill 292.** I am a long-time resident of Montgomery County who is concerned about the troubling racial disparities in traffic stops and the impact on Black drivers who are being stopped for minor infractions that do not result in other findings of wrongdoing.

**I support this bill because it will reduce unnecessary police encounters for minor traffic offenses that create opportunities for unjust outcomes at the hands of police.** The bill would establish limitations on traffic stops for minor non-moving and low-level traffic infractions that are to be distinguished from “collision contributing violations” that involve driving in a dangerous or unsafe manner. The bill takes an approach already implemented in a variety of jurisdictions.<sup>1</sup>

**Setting limits on traffic stops will reduce racial disparities and community trauma, improve community policing relationships, and promote policing efficiency and safety for all by allowing police to focus on high priority safety strategies.**

Racial profiling by law enforcement on American roads is a nation-wide problem that has been well documented. Black drivers are more likely than White drivers to be pulled over by police and Black and Latinx are significantly more likely to be searched. **For Black individuals, the disproportionate impact on them has turned driving, an ordinary American activity, into an experience fraught with discomfort, trauma, if not danger and risk.** Notably, national data show disproportionately higher racial disparities for drivers of color than for White drivers for stops for minor violations as compared to collision contributing violations.<sup>2</sup> It appears that no person of color is safe from this discriminatory treatment regardless of age, gender, type of car, or compliance with the law.

A stop can be traumatizing for Black individuals who already share collective trauma from the long history of police violence against the Black community in our country. There is a growing body of research that tells us the persistent exposure to police is linked to higher levels of stress and anxiety and that **policing that is more aggressive or intrusive can have deleterious effects on the mental health and well-being of**

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<sup>1</sup> Katie Blum and Jill Paperno, “Stop the Stops: The Disparate Use and Impact of Police Pretext Stops on Individuals and Communities of Color, A Preliminary Report,” Empire Justice Center (January 2023), p. 58-62, <https://empirejustice.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Stop-the-Stops-Empire-Justice-Centers-Preliminary-Report-on-Racial-Disparities-in-Pretext-Stops.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Blum (2023), p. 12-16; Emma Pierson, Camelia Simoiu, Jan Overgoor, et al., “A Large-scale analysis of racial disparities in police stops across the United States,” Nature Human Behavior, Vol. 4 (July 2020), p. 736-745, <https://www.nature.com/articles/s41562-020-0858-1>

**individuals** and communities.<sup>3</sup> Stops often involve language that is insulting, dehumanizing, humiliating, or abusive. However, even politeness on the part of police does not make an unjustified stop acceptable to someone who feels they have been singled out because of their race.

Stops can also lead to physical, even deadly, confrontations. Since 2017, more than 800 people have been killed after being pulled over in the U.S.<sup>4</sup> America's shameful history of police stops that have resulted in the deaths of Black men has created a visceral fear for people of color—a sense that regardless of how careful one might be, there is a chance that an encounter with police might become volatile and dangerous.

What is particularly problematic is that many of the stops in which people of color are disproportionately impacted are pretextual stops in which the alleged violation is only a pretext for stopping the vehicle to do a search. Even though police can legally do these pretextual stops, the disproportionate impact on Black drivers undermines trust in law enforcement and alienates law-abiding citizens.

**Policing practices like pretextual stops send the message that Black residents are not equal** and full members of the community, worthy of the same protection.

Moreover, the evidence is that they do not make us safer and that resources are better directed elsewhere. A pretextual stop for a minor violation can create a tense, unpredictable situation that can quickly escalate. The minimal number of arrests or items seized as a result of pretextual stops comes at a great cost.<sup>5</sup>

**As is in the case in other jurisdictions, there is no question that people of color are, and have been, disproportionately represented in traffic stops in Montgomery County for a long time.**

The Montgomery County Office of Legislative Oversight reported that traffic stop data for FY 2018-2022 show that Black drivers account for 30 percent of the stops while they represent about 18 percent of the population. Black males, who represent about 9 percent of the population, experienced 20 percent of the stops. OLO reported that the data also show that Black and Latinx drivers were stopped and searched for lower-level traffic

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<sup>3</sup> National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, *Reducing Racial Inequality in Crime and Justice: Science, Practice, and Policy*, Washington, DC: The National Academies Press (2023), p. 162, <https://www.nationalacademies.org/our-work/reducing-racial-inequalities-in-the-criminal-justice-system>

<sup>4</sup> According to statistics from the Mapping Police Violence data base. See “Why do so many police traffic stops turn deadly”, BBC News, Washington (January 31, 2023), <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-us-canada-64458041>

<sup>5</sup> Data from different jurisdictions suggest that pretextual stops amount to a needle-in-a-haystack approach to finding contraband. See Sam McCann, “Low-Level Traffic Stops are Ineffective—and Sometimes Deadly. Why are They Still Happening?” Vera News and Stories (March 29, 2023), <https://www.vera.org/news/low-level-traffic-stops-are-ineffective-and-sometimes-deadly-why-are-they-still-happening>

violations (such as expired registrations or equipment issues) at disproportionately higher rates than White drivers.<sup>6</sup>

Traffic stop data from the Maryland Safety Dashboard for 2016-2022 show that Black drivers in Montgomery County were twice as likely to be stopped for traffic violations than White drivers and more than 3 times as likely to be stopped and subsequently subject to a consensual search.<sup>7</sup> These data also show that pretextual stops with consent searches are less likely to result in an arrest for Black people in Montgomery County than White people, indicating bias.<sup>8</sup>

**SB 292 promotes public safety because the approach it takes allows traffic enforcement to focus on the most dangerous driver behavior** — impaired, reckless, distracted, and aggressive driving, and driving affecting pedestrian safety. While police might argue that the bill would limit the capacity of law enforcement, it is time to weigh the benefits of making stops that are not related to dangerous driving and that do not typically result in an arrest for criminal activity against the psychological toll they exact on innocent people, the adverse impact on community trust in policing, and the risk of physical danger to all involved.

**This bill takes a commonsense step in the right direction toward alleviating the harm caused by unnecessary police interactions with people of color in the state while continuing to support goals relating to improving road safety and eliminating fatalities and severe injuries.**

**For these reasons, I urge a Favorable report on SB 292.**

**Carol Cichowski**  
**Bethesda, Maryland**

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<sup>6</sup> OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12 (October 20, 2022), p. 9 and 20, [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2022\\_reports/OLORReport2022-12.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2022_reports/OLORReport2022-12.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Maryland Public Safety Dashboard. <https://goccp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/> Between 2016 and 2022, there were 149,162 stops of Black drivers and 156,938 stops of White drivers by police in the five agencies. Black drivers were stopped at a rate of 76 times for every 100 Black residents (149,162/197,077) compared to a rate of 36 for White drivers (156,938/430,980), resulting in a risk ratio of 2. I used the population data from the 2020 Decennial Census for all the population-based calculations. Over the 7-year period Black drivers were stopped and subject to a consensual search at a rate of almost 5 per 1000 Black residents (922/197,077) compared to the rate of about 1 per 1000 White residents (561/430,980). **These calculations may underestimate the impact on Black drivers because** they assume that Black residents are as likely as White residents to be driving in Montgomery County.

<sup>8</sup> National Academies of Sciences (2023), p. 71.



## **SB292\_CarolStern\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: CAROL STERN

Position: FAV

Carol Stern  
4550 North Park Avenue, Apt T106  
Chevy, Chase, MD 20815

**TESTIMONY ON SB 292**  
**(Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence)**

**TO:** Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Carol Stern

**My name is Carol Stern and I am a resident of District 16** and a member of Adat Shalom Reconstructionist Congregation in Bethesda. I provide this testimony **in support of SB 292** as a mother and grandmother.

The Jewish text that shapes my religious and moral conviction that all people and especially juveniles must be treated fairly is the directive issued in Deuteronomy 16:20, "Tzedek, tzedek tirdof - Justice, justice shall you pursue." The Jewish sages explain that the word tzedek is repeated not only for emphasis but to teach us that in our pursuit of justice, our means must be as just as our ends. Rabbi Mordecai Kaplan wrote "teach us to respect the integrity of every human soul be it that of a friend or stranger, child or adult." When we are working to reform our justice system, we must demand that it operates in accordance with these deeply held Jewish beliefs.

Police officers have a longstanding and well-documented history of **stopping drivers of color at significantly higher rates than white drivers**. A national study of nearly **100 million traffic stops** found that **Black drivers were stopped more often than white drivers**, relative to their share of the population. These racial disparities similarly apply to traffic-stop related searches and arrests. These racial disparities contribute to **life-long trauma** for the victims of these stops and an enduring **distrust**.

Additionally, younger and inexperienced drivers are more likely to commit traffic violations and, as a result, are stopped more frequently than older, more experienced drivers. Research shows that men and younger adults, including adolescents, tend to engage in higher levels of risky or unlawful behaviors, which may lead law enforcement officers to scrutinize younger men more closely during traffic stops compared to older individuals or women, regardless of race or ethnicity. This heightened scrutiny, combined with **existing racial disparities in traffic stops**, places **younger Black and Latinx men at an even higher risk of being stopped by police**.

As a mother of two children and a grandmother of three teenagers I understand the importance of the change this bill will provide. The passage of SB 292 will help to end the racial disparities in traffic stops, which disproportionately targets young Black and Latinx men.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB 292.**

# **Testimony Safer Traffic Stops Act.pdf**

Uploaded by: Charles E. Sydnor III

Position: FAV

CHARLES E. SYDNOR III, ESQ.  
*Legislative District 44*  
Baltimore County

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

*Joint Committees*

Administrative, Executive, and  
Legislative Review

Children, Youth, and Families

Senate Chair, Legislative Ethics



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony for Senate Bill 292  
Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement  
and Admissibility of Evidence  
Before the Judicial Proceeding Committee  
January 28, 2025**

Good afternoon, Chair Smith, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

In 2019, I was pulled over with my entire family during a vacation in Virginia<sup>1</sup>. As the officer's lights flashed and I pulled over to the shoulder, my three girls (age 9, 10, and 13 at the time) asked "why did he stop you daddy? What did you do wrong? Are you going to jail?" The entire family shared my anxiety, as I rolled down the window. I thought about Philando Castile, and countless others who did not survive routine traffic stops. I've been pulled over before and it is stressful, but good officers can usually put a driver at ease with clear communication and respect. But this trooper was harsh. He was condescending. It felt as though he was attempting to emasculate me in front of my wife and kids. And what was it all for? Driving too slow in the left lane. I explained to the officer that I had seen a speed limit sign of 45, but he rudely told me that was only when the lights were flashing. This distressing experience left a mark on me. Not only did this unnecessary interaction have no public safety purpose, it made my entire family feel unsafe.

That same year after receiving a tip from a concerned citizen regarding traffic disparities, I set out to uncover the traffic stop data from Baltimore County. After some effort, the data was made available and it was stark. The data showed that Black drivers were 73% more likely to be stopped by the Baltimore County Police than white drivers. Black drivers made up 56.25% of traffic stops in 2018, while making up just 26.1% of the population.<sup>2</sup>

It was this revelation that led to the creation of and my service on the Baltimore County's Equitable Policing Workgroup in 2020. Our Workgroup was organized to analyze available traffic stop data in Baltimore County and make recommendations on policies and practices on how to ensure equitable policing and bring greater transparency and accountability to the department. In the Workgroup's 2023 *Traffic Stop Deep Dive Report*, Baltimore County's Police Chief Robert

<sup>1</sup> [Driving too slow — a pretext for a Va. traffic stop – Baltimore Sun](#)

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.wbalte.com/article/work-group-racial-disparities-baltimore-county-police-traffic-stops/29669764>

McCullough has recognized the implementation of training programs including implicit bias, fair and impartial policing, active bystandership for law enforcement, de-escalation, and mindfulness.<sup>3</sup> These programs may have had an effect in conjunction with public scrutiny, considering that bias could be inferred in data between 2017 and 2019, but could not be inferred between 2020 and 2022, after their implementation. However, the disparities *after* traffic stops occur continues to persist.

The report stated, “Black Drivers are far more likely to have their person or vehicle searched for probable cause during a traffic stop, even these stops are less likely to find contraband for Black Drivers compared to White drivers.” It also stated, “We also found that Hispanic drivers are issued citations at a higher rate than both Black and White drivers.” While I can appreciate our chief’s efforts and I believe he and his police force are likely the rule rather than the exception, it is these disparities that spur me to seek and introduce a legislative remedy.

Today, I am here to testify in support of Senate Bill 292, which would change the categorization of certain low-level traffic infractions from primary offenses to secondary rather than primary enforcement. When a law enforcement officer conducts a traffic stop, there are two categories those stops can fall into: primary and secondary violations.

Primary violations allow an officer to initiate a traffic stop.<sup>4</sup> Most traffic violations, such as speeding, disobeying a traffic signal (running a red light, for example), or tailgating are considered primary violations.

Secondary violations, in contrast, are more minor violations. Secondary violations can only be investigated after a stop for a primary offense has occurred. An example of a secondary violation includes an item hanging from a rear-view mirror. Senate Bill 292 does a few things to ensure traffic stops are safer for all. First, Senate Bill 292 adds non-safety-related infractions to the list of secondary violations in Maryland. Under Senate Bill 292, the following types of violations would be recategorized as secondary rather than primary offenses:

- Driving with expired registration tags (for more than three months);
- Obstruction of vehicle registration plates in any manner;
- Driving without a functioning headlight, brake lights, or taillights;
- Driving without a mirror or with obstructed, or damaged mirrors;
- Window tint;
- Failure to illuminate a license plate;
- Driving in a dedicated bus-only lane;

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<sup>3</sup> [2023- Traffic Stop Deep Dive- Final Report](#)

<sup>4</sup> Specifically, a primary stop gives police officers the justification, “probable cause,” or “reasonable suspicion” to pull over a driver. A traffic stop is lawful under the Fourth Amendment when there is probable cause to believe that the driver has committed a violation of the vehicle laws, *Brice v. State*, 225 Md. App. 666, 695-96 (2015) (citing *Whren*, 517 U.S. at 810), or when an officer has reasonable, articulable suspicion that “criminal activity may be afoot[.]” *Id.* (quoting *Terry v. Ohio*, 392 U.S. 1, 30 (1968)). *See also Lewis v. State*, 398 Md. 349, 362 (2007) (quoting *Delaware v. Prouse*, 440 U.S. 648, 650 (1979)) (“[A] traffic stop violates the Fourth Amendment where there is no reasonable suspicion that the car is being driven contrary to the laws governing the operation of motor vehicles or that either the car or any of its occupants is subject to seizure or detention in connection with the violation of any other applicable laws.”).

- Excessive noise; and
- Failure to signal a turn (due to equipment not functioning or otherwise).

Second, the legislation also limits the incentives that lead to pretextual traffic stops by implementing an exclusionary rule that applies to evidence obtained in violation of this proposed law. In other words, prosecutors would no longer be permitted to use any evidence in a criminal proceeding that was obtained during a traffic stop that was initiated based on the minor traffic infractions identified in the bill. By shifting police traffic enforcement from making these types of stops to focusing on dangerous driving, jurisdictions can promote road safety and overall public safety, while advancing community trust in the police. The resources, time, and energy that go into traffic stops for non-safety reasons presents a significant opportunity cost. It is far more important for the safety of our roads for our officers engaged in traffic enforcement to be focusing on dangerous behavior that can be life threatening such reckless driving, speeding, running red lights, driving under the influence, or tailgating.

It is also incredibly tedious and time consuming. I received an email in December from a gentleman who went on ride with a Baltimore County police officer who spent the night running plates on the same one mile stretch of road, and if the computer indicated a problem (almost always with insurance or registration) he would conduct a stop. He “asked the officer if he ever wrote tickets for these types of infractions, and he responded that he only did so rarely, if the driver was a jerk. So, I asked why pull people over in the first place? He responded that his superiors expected him to have a certain number of ‘interactions’ each shift, and that because of the way shifts worked, a warning counted the same as a ticket.”<sup>5</sup>

Furthermore, when an officer pulls over a vehicle on a roadway or highway, they are placed at-risk by vehicles traveling at high speeds that are passing by, especially when their vision is obstructed by inclement weather or lack of daylight. Earlier this month, two Baltimore City police officers were hospitalized after being struck by a passing vehicle while attempting to conduct a traffic stop in the early morning.<sup>6</sup> In 2021, when the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association and the Maryland Sheriffs’ Association opposed legislation, I introduced called Know your Rights Acts, they testified that traffic stops are “the most inherently dangerous activities in which police officers are involved.” But they can also be inherently dangerous for everyone else; especially for Black motorists.

Finally, the legislation would require officers to disclose the reason for a traffic stop before engaging the driver in any questioning related to a criminal investigation or traffic violation, subject to exigency exceptions.

In conclusion, recategorizing non-safety related traffic stops— that are disproportionately enforced on black and brown Marylanders— will enhance public safety by refocusing strained police resources on serious traffic offenses that threaten road safety and rebalancing police workload towards violent crime. I urge a favorable report.

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<sup>5</sup> December 3, 2024 email to Senator Sydnor.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.wbalTV.com/article/baltimore-police-officers-struck-by-car-traffic-stop/63392849>

# **Chris Burbank Testimony in Support of SB 292.pdf**

Uploaded by: Chris Burbank

Position: FAV

January 28, 2025

Chris Burbank  
Salt Lake City Police Chief (Retired), Center for Policing Equity

### **Testimony before the Judiciary Proceedings Committee in Support of Senate Bill 292**

My name is Chris Burbank, I am the former Police Chief of Salt Lake City and spent nine years in that position. During that time I served as Vice President of the Major Cities Chiefs, an association of the 70 largest cities in the United States and Canada. Additionally, I am past President of the FBI National Executive Institute Associates. Currently, I am with the Center for Policing Equity, a research and action organization that uses science to identify and reduce the causes of racial disparities in public safety.

Whenever we speak of changes to traditional law enforcement activities, arrests, searches, and tickets we are met with an uninformed rebuttal of crime rising and chaos on our roadways. This is simply not accurate. There is not a scientific correlation between the beloved, TV-making actions of policing and increased safety in our communities. Crime, and yes, traffic crashes have traditionally run independent of policing activities.

SB 292 represents an educated step towards prioritizing a limited and specialized resource, policing. In New Haven, Connecticut when the chief reprioritized traffic enforcement to focus on dangerous driving the department reported a six percent reduction in equipment and administrative offenses, accidents dropped by ten percent, and crime dropped by five percent.<sup>1</sup> I'm not going to tell you crime is going to decrease because of this bill. More importantly, I'm telling you the opposition's gloom is inaccurate. I will tell you what the benefits of passing this bill will be; enhanced trust and confidence in government, decreased racial disparities in enforcement and improved law enforcement legitimacy.

This bill is not tying the hands of law enforcement. The Constitution of the United States is not a tool of law enforcement but rather a boundary, setting forth a minimum standard of conduct. The practice of enforcement should not walk us near that precipice. We have individuals in this country with hundreds of documented police initiated encounters. These encounters are not ending in prison sentences for acts of violence, they are not enhancing public safety. They are, most certainly, adding to the disparate outcomes of policing and decimating neighborhoods across Maryland and the Nation. Pretext stops are not effective at keeping communities safe.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Ross, M. B., Kalinowski, J. J., & Barone, K. (2020). Testing for disparities in traffic stops: Best practices from the Connecticut model. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 19(4), 1289–1303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12528>

<sup>2</sup> Dias, M., Epp, D. A., Roman, M., & Walker, H. L. (2024). Consent searches: Evaluating the usefulness of a common and highly discretionary police practice. *Journal of Empirical Legal Studies*, 21(1), 35–91. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jels.12377>





We can do better. The economic and social cost of traffic enforcement for non-safety infractions outweighs any benefit. The time has come for us to ask of policing, “should we?” as opposed to “can we?”. I encourage you to support SB 292.

## **SB292 Vera Institute of Justice**

Uploaded by: Dan Bodah

Position: FAV

**Testimony of Daniel Bodah, Esq.  
Senior Program Associate, Redefining Public Safety  
Vera Institute of Justice**

**Before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee of Maryland  
Maryland Senate Bill (SB) 292, Motor Vehicles  
Secondary Enforcement & Admissibility of Evidence**

January 24, 2025

The Vera Institute of Justice appreciates the opportunity to provide testimony to the Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee in support of SB 292. Vera is a national research and policy organization that has been working to end mass incarceration and build safe, thriving communities for more than 60 years. As a senior program associate with Vera's Redefining Public Safety initiative, I work with law enforcement leaders, legislators, and community members across the United States in efforts to improve roadway safety and address harmful racial disparities in traffic enforcement while maintaining public safety.

Nationally, police stop more than 20 million motorists a year for alleged traffic violations.<sup>1</sup> A significant number of these traffic stops are for minor violations that do not affect public safety. This is also true in Maryland. In 2023, the most common reasons for traffic stops in Maryland given by local and state police were registration violations (23 percent) and equipment defects (20 percent).<sup>2</sup> Available data covering 2016 to 2023 shows that these are long-standing enforcement trends: over this period, equipment defects are the top reason for stops (20 percent), and registration violations are third (15 percent).<sup>3</sup>

However, traffic safety research also shows that crashes and crash-related deaths have increased in recent years in Maryland, and these low-level infractions are not significant factors in roadway safety.<sup>4</sup> As detailed below, these stops for low-level infractions are not only unnecessary for keeping roads safe, but they also do not effectively prevent crime, and they disproportionately subject Black drivers and other drivers of color to harmful, unwarranted stops, searches, and uses of force. SB 292 presents a reasonable policy approach to modernize traffic enforcement that will prioritize traffic safety, reduce harm to communities, and free police to fight serious crime more effectively.

**I. SB 292 Represents a Solution**

Addressing low-level stops is emerging as a key solution to the harms caused by traffic stops, as well as high traffic fatalities nationwide.<sup>5</sup> Backed by evidence, states from Virginia to Oregon and cities from Philadelphia to Ann Arbor have enacted policies like SB 292 that remove police from enforcement of minor traffic violations. By Vera's count, at least 12 jurisdictions nationwide have passed such policies, and many more have done so by law enforcement agencies directing officers to refocus traffic enforcement on safety.<sup>6</sup> Extensive research shows that these policies provide four key benefits:

**First, policies like SB 292 improve traffic safety by freeing police to focus enforcement on unsafe driving behavior.** A major study showed that by virtually eliminating stops for minor traffic violations, one jurisdiction in North Carolina was able to focus on safety stops for dangerous driving. This reduced traffic accidents and racial disparity in overall stops—with no impact on non-traffic-related crime.<sup>7</sup> Traffic enforcement provides safety when it focuses on high-risk behaviors like speeding and impaired

driving. By redirecting limited police resources away from low-level infractions unrelated to road safety, SB 292 would support Maryland’s strategic highway safety goals.

**Second, ending low-level stops can promote public safety and community trust.** The frequency of these stops and their disparate impact on communities of color can compound distrust in government institutions such as police departments and prosecutors’ offices, which depend on the public’s cooperation to solve crimes.<sup>8</sup> Studies repeatedly show that Black drivers and other drivers of color are not only more likely to be stopped than white drivers but are also treated more harshly during stops.<sup>9</sup> Further, they are subjected to more use of force and more frequent searches despite being less likely to have contraband.<sup>10</sup>

**Third, these policies can protect drivers and police from being hurt in unnecessary traffic stops.**<sup>11</sup> In 2024, police killed 152 people during traffic stops.<sup>12</sup> Traffic stops are also dangerous for law enforcement officers; being killed by a passing car during a traffic stop is one of the top five reasons for line-of-duty deaths.<sup>13</sup> Fines and fees from traffic stops can also cause economic harm, pushing low-income Americans further into a cycle of debt and poverty.<sup>14</sup> Further, the social costs of police interactions like traffic stops include harms to health, educational development, and economic security.<sup>15</sup>

**Fourth, these policies reduce harmful racial disparities.** The harms of traffic stops are not equally felt. Nationally, more than a quarter of people killed in traffic stops are Black, despite Black people making up only 12 percent of the population.<sup>16</sup> And although racial disparities abound throughout traffic enforcement, studies in Montgomery County, Maryland, and elsewhere find greater disparities in non-safety stops than in safety-related stops.<sup>17</sup> Eliminating these stops works: after Philadelphia instituted its policy on low-level stops, traffic stops involving Black men went down 54 percent.<sup>18</sup>

Long-standing racial disparities in Maryland’s traffic enforcement are documented in the Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard established by the legislature with [Transportation Article § 25–113\(f\)\(2\)](#). In 2023, Black drivers made up more than 43 percent of drivers stopped by police—despite representing only 32 percent of the state population. Conversely, white drivers accounted for 39 percent of stopped drivers but 57 percent of the population.<sup>19</sup> These racial disparities are consistently present dating back to the beginning of data collection in 2016.<sup>20</sup>

## **II. Ending Low Level Traffic Stops Has Proven to Increase Public Safety**

Opponents of these policies tend to argue that these stops are necessary for fighting crime and keeping the road safe, both of which are demonstrably false.

**Regarding public safety,** which is often the stated reason for enforcing these minor infractions, low-level stops very rarely result in the recovery of guns or other contraband.<sup>21</sup> Data from across the country has repeatedly confirmed this, including Vera’s own research in Suffolk County, Massachusetts.<sup>22</sup> A 2018 study of nonmoving violation traffic stops in Nashville, Tennessee, found that less than one-tenth of one percent (0.8 out of every 1,000) of such stops resulted in police charging someone with possessing a weapon. The Nashville study also found—as did the previously referenced North Carolina study—that non-traffic crime did not go up when the volume of traffic stops went down.<sup>23</sup>

Looking more broadly at *all* traffic stops, studies find that they are not an effective crime fighting tool.<sup>24</sup> For example, a recent study of the eight largest California police departments revealed that firearms were confiscated in only about 0.5 percent of stops.<sup>25</sup> In Maryland, the Montgomery County Police Department's (MCPD) numbers are even lower: in 2022, MCPD confiscated firearms in just 172 out of 35,945 traffic stops, a 0.5 percent recovery rate, or approximately one seizure per 209 stops.<sup>26</sup> While addressing gun violence is an important goal, police should use methods far more precise than the needle in a haystack approach of searching vehicles for firearms during tens of thousands of unrelated traffic stops, given the grave risk to drivers' safety and community trust caused by these stops.

**Regarding road safety**, banning low-level stops does not prohibit police from making traffic stops due to more serious equipment violations, like two missing headlights or anything causing visibly reckless driving. Also, the equipment violations enforced in low-level traffic stops do not contribute to accidents, as a Connecticut analysis found. For example, defective lighting accounted for 9.4 percent of all Connecticut traffic stops, but only 0.1 percent of crashes between 2015 and 2019.<sup>27</sup> The evidence is clear: eliminating the low-level stops specified in SB 292 will not prevent police from stopping dangerous driving. The status quo has failed to keep Maryland roadways safe from crashes, and modernizing roadway safety requires laws like SB 292 that refocus enforcement on the dangerous, intoxicated, and distracted driving that we know is responsible for carnage on the roads.<sup>28</sup>

### III. Policies like SB 292 Have Bipartisan Voter Support

Polling from Safer Cities Research indicates that 69 percent of all voters support such policies, with support from 81 percent of Democrats and 59 percent of Republicans. When asked the best approach to dealing with a driver with a single burned-out brake or taillight, for example, only 21 percent of voters selected a stop by an armed police officer.<sup>29</sup> Voters clearly understand there are better ways to handle these issues.

SB 292 takes a meaningful yet commonsense approach to the harms of low-level traffic stops, curtailing police enforcement only for a targeted and evidence-backed list of minor violations unrelated to public safety. We encourage the Maryland legislature to join the national movement to modernize traffic enforcement through a well-crafted policy that can save lives and also reduce harmful racial disparities. Everyone in Maryland deserves to be safe behind the wheel, and SB 292 is a step in that direction.

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Thank you for the opportunity to contribute testimony. Please contact me at [dbodah@vera.org](mailto:dbodah@vera.org) if the Vera Institute of Justice may provide further information or assistance.

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<sup>1</sup> The Stanford Open Policing Project, "Findings," 2023, <https://openpolicing.stanford.edu/findings/>.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy (GOCPP), "Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard," accessed January 24, 2025, <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard>.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, *Traffic Safety Facts 2022: A Compilation of Motor Vehicle Crash Data* (Washington, DC: Department of Transportation, 2024), "Table 64. Related Factors for Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes," 111, <https://crashstats.nhtsa.dot.gov/Api/Public/ViewPublication/813656>; and Maryland

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Department of Transportation Motor Vehicle Administration Highway Safety Office, “Maryland Crash Data,” accessed January 25, 2025, <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata>.

<sup>5</sup> See Sarah Holder, “These Cities Are Limiting Traffic Stops for Minor Offenses,” Bloomberg CityLab + Equality, February 2, 2023, [perma.cc/AJW7-ZMFY](https://perma.cc/AJW7-ZMFY). For high traffic fatalities in the United States, see Jonathan Adkins, “U.S. Traffic Deaths Remain Unacceptably High Despite Minor Decrease,” press release (Washington, DC: Governors Highway Safety Association, January 9, 2023), [perma.cc/9ZGK-HPSX](https://perma.cc/9ZGK-HPSX).

<sup>6</sup> Jurisdictions passing these policies include Virginia, Philadelphia (PA), San Francisco (CA), Pittsburgh (PA), West Hollywood (CA), Brooklyn Center (MN), Berkeley (CA), Oregon, Evanston (IL), New York, Chapel Hill (NC), and Memphis (TN). Jurisdiction enacting such policy through police order include Fayetteville (NC), Nashville (TN), Lansing (MI), Los Angeles (CA), Seattle (WA), Portland (OR), Culver City (CA), Oakland (CA), Minneapolis (MN), and Mecklenburg County (NC). Jurisdictions with relevant prosecutorial policies include Ingham County (MI), Ramsey County (MN), Chittenden County (VT), and Washtenaw County (MI).

<sup>7</sup> Mike Dolan Fliss, Frank Baumgartner, and Paul Delamater, et al., “Re-prioritizing traffic stops to reduce motor vehicle crash outcomes and racial disparities,” *Injury Epidemiology* 7, no. 3 (2020), [perma.cc/S75L-HMUE](https://perma.cc/S75L-HMUE).

<sup>8</sup> Libby Doyle and Susan Nembhard, “Police Traffic Stops Have Little to Do with Public Safety,” Urban Institute, April 16, 2021, [perma.cc/UG9K-Z7X2](https://perma.cc/UG9K-Z7X2); and Simone Weichselbaum, Emily R. Siegel, and Andrew Blankstein, “Police face a ‘crisis of trust’ with Black motorists. One state’s surprising policy may help.” NBC News, October 7, 2021, [perma.cc/T2FX-WW4H](https://perma.cc/T2FX-WW4H).

<sup>9</sup> Stanford Open Policing Project, “Findings,” 2023.

<sup>10</sup> Center for Policing Equity, “Compounding Anti-Black Racial Disparities in Police Stops,” October 9, 2024, <https://www.policingequity.org/newsroom/official-statements/cpe-publishes-white-paper-on-compounding-anti-black-racial-disparities-in-police-stops>.

<sup>11</sup> See Sarah Holder, “These Cities Are Limiting Traffic Stops for Minor Offenses,” Bloomberg CityLab + Equality, February 2, 2023, [perma.cc/AJW7-ZMFY](https://perma.cc/AJW7-ZMFY). For more on the physical harms of traffic stops, see Sam Levin, “US Police Have Killed Nearly 600 People in Traffic Stops Since 2017, Data Shows,” *Guardian*, April 21, 2022, [perma.cc/YS2U-SZD4](https://perma.cc/YS2U-SZD4); for psychological harms, see Rheana Murray, “The Conversation Black Parents Have With Their Kids About Cops,” ABC News, December 8, 2014, [perma.cc/J7ZZ-HVAW](https://perma.cc/J7ZZ-HVAW); for economic harm, see German Lopez, “The Tyranny of a Traffic Ticket,” *Vox*, August 10, 2016, [perma.cc/K6E5-3BGU](https://perma.cc/K6E5-3BGU); for high traffic fatalities in the United States, see Jonathan Adkins, “U.S. Traffic Deaths Remain Unacceptably High Despite Minor Decrease,” press release (Washington, DC: Governors Highway Safety Association, January 9, 2023), [perma.cc/9ZGK-HPSX](https://perma.cc/9ZGK-HPSX).

<sup>12</sup> Mapping Police Violence, “2024 Police Violence Report,” 2025, <https://policeviolencereport.org>.

<sup>13</sup> National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, “Causes of Law Enforcement Deaths: Over the Past Decade (2014-2023),” <https://nleomf.org/memorial/facts-figures/officer-fatality-data/causes-of-law-enforcement-deaths>.

<sup>14</sup> The Crime Report, “Driven to Debt: How Traffic Fines ‘Punish Americans for Their Poverty,’” March 8, 2019, [perma.cc/6RQ4-2ZQR](https://perma.cc/6RQ4-2ZQR).

<sup>15</sup> Aaron Stagoff-Belfort, Daniel Bodah, Daniela Gilbert, *The Social Costs of Policing* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2022), [perma.cc/6ZN7-M2UT](https://perma.cc/6ZN7-M2UT).

<sup>16</sup> Levin, “US Police Have Killed,” 2022. See also, Mapping Police Violence, “2022 Police Violence Report,” 2023.

<sup>17</sup> For racial disparities in all traffic enforcement, see Emma Pierson, Camelia Simoiu, Jan Overgoor, et al., “A Large-Scale Analysis of Racial Disparities in Police Stops Across the United States,” *Nature* 4 (2020), 736-745, [perma.cc/3LR6-ZBDF](https://perma.cc/3LR6-ZBDF). For racial disparities in low-level stops, see Frank R. Baumgartner, Derek A. Epp, and Kelsey Shoub, *Suspect Citizens: What 20 Million Traffic Stops Tell Us About Policing and Race* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018). For racial disparities in Montgomery County traffic stops, see Natalia Carrizosa, Memorandum from Montgomery County (MD) Office of Legislative Oversight to County Council, OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12, re: “Analysis of data Montgomery Traffic Violations Dataset,” October 25, 2022, 15-19, <http://perma.cc/DQG6-VNXN>.

<sup>18</sup> Sammy Caiola, “Data Shows Philly Traffic Stops Involving Black Men are Down 54 percent” WHYY, March 6, 2023, [perma.cc/LMJ3-FFSH](https://perma.cc/LMJ3-FFSH). The findings from Fayetteville, NC also showed that eliminating low level traffic stops reduced racial disparities. See Fliss et al., “Re-prioritizing traffic stops,” 2020.

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<sup>19</sup> Maryland GOCPP, “Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard.” For population demographics, see U.S. Census Bureau, “Quick Facts Maryland,” access January 27, 2025, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/MD/PST045223>.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> ACLU-DC & ACLU Analytics, *Racial Disparities in Stops by the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department: Review of Five Months of Data* (Washington, DC: ACLU, 2020), [perma.cc/N4B8-AA86](https://perma.cc/N4B8-AA86).

<sup>22</sup> Seleeke Flingai, Mona Sahaf, Nicole Battle, and Savannah Castañeda, *An Analysis of Racial Disparities in Police Traffic Stops in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, from 2010 to 2019* (New York: Vera 2022), 34.

<sup>23</sup> The Policing Project at New York University School of Law, *An Assessment of Traffic Stops and Policing Strategies in Nashville* (New York: New York University School of Law, 2018), 9, [perma.cc/YFD2-7RJL](https://perma.cc/YFD2-7RJL); and Fliss et al., “Re-prioritizing traffic stops,” 2020.

<sup>24</sup> Geoff Pearson and Mike Rowe, “Gone Fishing: The Operation of Police Vehicle Stops in England and Wales,” *Criminology and Criminal Justice*, February 25, 2023, [doi.org/10.1177/17488958231155275](https://doi.org/10.1177/17488958231155275).

<sup>25</sup> Deepak Premkumar, Andrew Skelton, and Magnus Lofstrom, “How Often Are Firearms Confiscated During Traffic Stops?” Public Policy Institute of California, February 16, 2023, [perma.cc/92WP-RHWJ](https://perma.cc/92WP-RHWJ).

<sup>26</sup> Montgomery County Council, Transportation & Environment and Public Safety Committees, *Discussion: OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12: Analysis of Data Montgomery Traffic Violations Dataset*, February 6, 2023, 1:32:00 (statement of Captain Brian Dillman, Traffic Operations Division, MCPD), [youtube.com/watch?v=y0d\\_5\\_FhGxo](https://youtube.com/watch?v=y0d_5_FhGxo).

<sup>27</sup> Memorandum from Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Advisory Board to Logistics Subcommittee, Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force, re: “Evaluation and Recommendations of a Primary and Secondary Traffic Enforcement System,” February 4, 2021, [perma.cc/9DLL-H98G](https://perma.cc/9DLL-H98G).

<sup>28</sup> For information on effective ways to reduce pedestrian deaths, see U.S. Department of Transportation, “What Is a Safe System Approach?” <http://transportation.gov/NRSS/SafeSystem>.

<sup>29</sup> Vera Institute of Justice, *New Polling Shows Support for Limiting Police Stops for Low-Level Traffic Violations* (New York: Vera, 2023), [perma.cc/DY9L-9FAQ](https://perma.cc/DY9L-9FAQ).

# **SB292 Maryland Municipal League**

Uploaded by: Dan Cordially

Position: FAV





Maryland Municipal League  
*The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns*

## TESTIMONY

January 28, 2025

**Committee:** Senate Judicial Proceedings

**Bill:** SB 292 - Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence

**Position:** Oppose

**Reason for Position:**

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) respectfully opposes Senate Bill 292, which establishes substantial new requirements for law enforcement officers during traffic stops, including prohibiting officers from referring to the Maryland Vehicle Law as the primary reason for pulling over a driver.

Local governments, which often rely on local law enforcement, view this bill as harmful to crime prevention efforts. Under this bill, an officer could not detain a driver for suspended registration, driving in a bus lane, driving with a broken headlight, or excessive noise, among others. These types of traffic stops are a major way law enforcement catches criminal activity—such as drugs, stolen cars, or illegal weapons—that might otherwise go unnoticed. Limiting police officers' ability to pull over drivers could make it more difficult to address certain safety issues, like impaired driving, reckless driving, or unregistered vehicles, and provide fewer opportunities to stop dangerous behavior before it escalates into accidents or more serious incidents.

Further, local governments rely on fines and fees collected from traffic violations as a source of revenue. A bill that reduces the number of police stops could lead to a decrease in this revenue, putting additional strain on local budgets. And if drivers are no longer incentivized to timely renew their registration, revenue collected from vehicle registration on the state level will also decrease.

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 292. For more information, please contact Angelica Bailey Thupari, Director of Advocacy & Public Affairs, at [angelicab@mdmunicipal.org](mailto:angelicab@mdmunicipal.org) or (443) 756-0071. Thank you in advance for your consideration.

*The Maryland Municipal League uses its collective voice to advocate, empower and protect the interests of our 160 local governments members and elevates local leadership, delivers impactful solutions for our communities, and builds an inclusive culture for the 2 million Marylanders we serve.*

# **STOPS\_Evidence Guide.pdf**

Uploaded by: Daniel Bodah

Position: FAV

# Evidence Supports Limiting Non-Safety-Related Traffic Stops

This guide references evidence showing that limiting the enforcement of non-safety-related traffic infractions can improve roadway safety and reduce racial inequities, without increasing crime.\*

## 1. Limiting non-safety-related traffic stops can improve traffic safety.

*Adoption of a policy by the Fayetteville, North Carolina, police department to deprioritize stops for minor equipment and administrative infractions and focus instead on moving violations resulted in large decreases in traffic crashes and decreases in racially disparate outcomes of traffic enforcement, with no associated rise in crime.*

Mike Dolan Fliss, Frank Baumgartner, and Paul Delamater, et al., “Re-Prioritizing Traffic Stops to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crash Outcomes and Racial Disparities,” *Injury Epidemiology* 7, no. 3 (2020), <http://perma.cc/S75L-HMUE>.

*An anti-drunk-driving unit of the Newington, Connecticut, police used stops for minor lighting infractions to unsuccessfully seek intoxicated drivers. Shifting to a focus on moving violations instead helped police achieve a 250 percent increase in DUI arrests along with a substantial decrease in racial disparities.*

Tom Condon, “After a Poor Start, CT’s Anti-Racial Profiling Effort Is Making Progress,” *Connecticut Mirror*, January 30, 2022, <https://perma.cc/5JKB-HF2Z>.

## Non-safety-related traffic enforcement wastes police resources.

*In 2019, traffic stops that ended without arrest, citation, or a warning in California’s 15 largest law enforcement agencies accounted for more than 80,000 hours of officer time. More than half of these stops stemmed from minor non-safety-related infractions.*

Magnus Lofstrom, Joseph Hayes, Brandon Martin, and Deepak Premkumar, *Racial Disparities in Traffic Stops* (San Francisco, CA: Public Policy Institute of California, 2022), <https://perma.cc/JQ53-6S4A>.

*In 2019, individual counties in California spent tens of millions of dollars conducting stops for equipment and administrative traffic infractions. Just two counties, Sacramento and San Diego, together spent about \$80 million on non-safety-related stops, which took up more than 5,000 hours of law enforcement time. Meanwhile, traffic fatalities in California increased 37 percent from 2011 to 2020.*

Chauncey Smith, Elycia Mulholland Graves, Jacky Guerrero, et al., *Reimagining Community Safety in California: From Deadly and Expensive Sheriffs to Equity and Care-Centered Wellbeing*, (Los Angeles: Catalyst California and ACLU of Southern California, 2022), <https://perma.cc/63E6-XLKV>.

*Traffic stops were the most common (43 percent) tactic used to generate drug arrests in Orange County, Florida. Given their negative impact on community relations and the availability of tactics that are more*

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\* To avoid link rot and allow readers to access non-paywalled URLs permanently, Vera uses [perma.cc](https://perma.cc/), an online resource that develops permanent URL records by taking a “snapshot” of the original source and hosting a new, unique URL. To access the original link, click “View the live page” at the top of the window.

*likely to lead to a prosecution, the benefits of using traffic stops for drug enforcement did not outweigh the drawbacks.*

Nicholas Paul, “An Examination of Street-Level Drug Enforcement Tactics and Court Outcomes,” PhD diss., University of Central Florida, 2022, <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2425&context=etd2020>.

*Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPd) concentrated traffic stops in high-crime areas and pulled over Black drivers at a rate 44 percent higher than white drivers. This disparity in rates was even greater for non-moving violations like burnt-out lights or expired registrations. Non-moving violation traffic stops, most of which were conducted by a small portion of MNPd officers, had no impact on serious crime, rarely led to recovery of contraband, and accounted for a substantial amount of the racial disparities in MNPd’s traffic enforcement.*

Alex Chohlas-Wood, Sharad Goel, Amy Shoemaker and Ravi Shroff, *An Analysis of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department’s Traffic Stop Practices*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford Computational Policy Lab, 2018), <https://perma.cc/RV3T-YEFD>.

*From 2010 to 2019, police in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, (Boston area) stopped Black drivers at 2.3 times the rate of white drivers for non-safety-related infractions, such as improperly displayed license plates or a single broken taillight. Just 15 non-safety-related infractions accounted for nearly half of the racial disparity.*

Seleeke Flingai, Mona Sahaf, Nicole Battle, and Savannah Castaneda, *An Analysis of Racial Disparities in Police Traffic Stops in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, from 2010 to 2019* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2022), <https://www.vera.org/publications/analysis-of-racial-disparities-police-traffic-stops-suffolk-county-ma>.

## **Non-safety-related enforcement does not improve traffic safety outcomes.**

*Black drivers in Connecticut are stopped at almost twice the rate of white drivers for non-safety-related infractions. While the equipment infractions enforced by police—such as lighting defects or improperly affixed license plates—do not contribute to accidents.*

Memorandum from Connecticut Racial Profiling Prohibition Advisory Board to Logistics Subcommittee, Police Transparency and Accountability Task Force, re: “Evaluation and Recommendations of a Primary and Secondary Traffic Enforcement System,” February 4, 2021, <http://perma.cc/9DLL-H98G>.

## **2. Enforcing non-safety infractions is an ineffective way to uncover serious crime, and crime does not rise when police shift to enforcing moving violations instead**

*After Philadelphia adopted an ordinance removing eight non-safety-related infractions from police enforcement, stops for those offenses declined significantly while stops for moving violations increased. The top reason for a car stop shifted from a broken taillight to running a red light, and Black drivers saw a 54 percent decrease in stops of the type targeted by the ordinance, though racial disparities persisted.*

Sammy Caiola, “Data Shows Philly Traffic Stops Involving Black Men Are Down 54 percent,” WHYY NPR, March 6, 2023, <https://perma.cc/6T8B-XN65>.

Sam Raim, “Police Are Stopping Fewer Drivers — and It’s Increasing Safety,” Vera Institute of Justice, January 11, 2024, <https://www.vera.org/news/police-are-stopping-fewer-drivers-and-its-increasing-safety>.

*A study of the eight largest California police departments revealed that they confiscate firearms in only about 0.5 percent of traffic stops.*

Deepak Premkumar, Andrew Skelton, and Magnus Lofstrum, “How Often Are Firearms Confiscated During Traffic Stops?” Public Policy Institute of California, February 16, 2023, <https://perma.cc/92WP-RHWJ>.

*In Washington, DC, police recovered a gun in only 0.6 percent of traffic and pedestrian stops in the second half of 2019.*

ACLU-DC and ACLU Analytics, *Racial Disparities in Stops by the D.C. Metropolitan Police Department: Review of Five Months of Data* (Washington, DC: ACLU, 2020), <https://perma.cc/N4B8-AA86>.

*An analysis revealed that contraband was discovered in only 0.27 percent of traffic stops by the Washington State Patrol and 0.11 percent of traffic stops by the Tacoma Police Department.*

ACLU of Washington and Vera Institute of Justice, “Traffic Safety for All—Equitable Solutions to Rising Traffic Fatalities in Washington (HB 1513),” <https://perma.cc/W5S6-PHH2>.

*An ethnographic study of 200 traffic stops in England found that they were ineffective as a crime fighting tool and encouraged racially disparate outcomes.*

Geoff Pearson and Mike Rowe, “Gone Fishing: The Operation of Police Vehicle Stops in England and Wales,” *Criminology & Criminal Justice*, February 25, 2023, <https://doi.org/10.1177/17488958231155275>.

## **Policies reducing non-safety-related traffic stops do not lead to more crime.**

*A study in Ramsey County, Minnesota, demonstrated that crime did not rise when prosecutors and police stopped enforcing non-safety-related traffic infractions.*

Rory Pulvino, Jess Sorensen, JJ Naddeo, and Jared Fishman, “Traffic Stop Policy in Ramsey County, MN,” Justice Innovation Lab, June 7, 2023, <https://perma.cc/8W2L-W4LS>.

*Adoption of a policy by the Fayetteville, North Carolina, police department to deprioritize stops for minor equipment infractions and focus instead on moving violations resulted in large decreases in traffic crashes and decreases in racially disparate outcomes of traffic enforcement, with no associated rise in crime.*

Mike Dolan Fliss, Frank Baumgartner, and Paul Delamater, et al., “Re-Prioritizing Traffic Stops to Reduce Motor Vehicle Crash Outcomes and Racial Disparities,” *Injury Epidemiology* 7, no. 3 (2020), <http://perma.cc/S75L-HMUE>.

*Less than one-tenth of one percent (0.8 out of every 1,000) of traffic stops by the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department (MNPd) for non-safety-related infractions resulted in weapon possession charges, and traffic stops had no impact on serious crime.*

Alex Chohlas-Wood, Sharad Goel, Amy Shoemaker and Ravi Shroff, *An Analysis of the Metropolitan Nashville Police Department’s Traffic Stop Practices*, (Stanford, CA: Stanford Computational Policy Lab, 2018), <https://perma.cc/RV3T-YEFD>.

*In 2022—the year Philadelphia implemented a law removing eight non-safety-related infractions from police enforcement—police conducted 70 percent fewer traffic stops than in 2019 but still seized more guns.*

Sam Raim, “Police Are Stopping Fewer Drivers — and It’s Increasing Safety,” Vera Institute of Justice, January 11, 2024, <https://www.vera.org/news/police-are-stopping-fewer-drivers-and-its-increasing-safety>

### **3. Shifting away from police stops for non-safety-related infractions can reduce racially disparate outcomes.**

*Data from all 20 million traffic stops in North Carolina from 2002 to 2017 show that Black drivers were about 63 percent more likely to be stopped and more than twice as likely to be searched as white drivers. Vehicle stops were extremely inefficient at uncovering crime but created distrust of the police in the most impacted communities.*

Frank R. Baumgartner, Derek A. Epp and Kelsey Shoub, *Suspect Citizens: What 20 Million Traffic Stops Tell Us About Policing and Race* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

*In 2021, the Ramsey County, Minnesota, County Attorney ceased prosecuting cases arising from non-safety-related traffic enforcement or based on evidence found in suspicionless consent searches. At about the same time, four local police departments adopted policies shifting their traffic enforcement focus to moving violations rather than non-safety-related infractions. As a result, Ramsey County saw reductions in non-safety-related stops and in racial disparities in stops and searches, with no associated increase in crime.*

Rory Pulvino, Jess Sorensen, JJ Naddeo, and Jared Fishman, “Traffic Stop Policy in Ramsey County, MN,” Justice Innovation Lab, June 7, 2023, <https://perma.cc/8W2L-W4LS>.

*Laws banning racial profiling, such as those adopted in California, Texas, and Connecticut, have not eliminated racially inequitable outcomes..*

Rebecca Yin, “Bans with No Bite: Why Racial Profiling Bans Are Unable to Create Racial Justice in Policing,” *Cardozo Law Review* 43, no. 4 (2022), <https://perma.cc/S5FJ-H74S>.

*Data from almost 100 million traffic stops across the United States show that Black drivers are less likely to be stopped at night than during the day because darkness hides drivers’ race, suggesting racial bias plays a part in stop decisions. Once they initiated a stop, police were approximately twice as likely to search Black and Latinx drivers as white drivers, despite Black and Latinx drivers being less likely than white drivers to have contraband.*

Emma Pierson, Camelia Simoiu, Jan Overgoor, et al., “A Large-Scale Analysis of Racial Disparities in Police Stops Across the United States,” *Nature Human Behavior* 4 (2020), <https://perma.cc/3LR6-ZBDF>.

*A study of traffic stops in Kansas City, Missouri, found that Black drivers were 2.7 times more likely to be stopped by police than white drivers for non-safety-related infractions and that they received more intrusive, threatening, and rude treatment from police when stopped.*

Charles R. Epp, Steven Maynard-Moody, and Donald P. Haider-Markel, *Pulled Over: How Police Stops Define Race and Citizenship* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2014).

*In Montgomery County, Maryland, police stopped Black and Latinx drivers disproportionately, and these disparities persisted or worsened when overall stop rates declined. Racial disparities were concentrated in administrative (license and insurance) and equipment infractions, and lowest among moving violations.*



Natalia Carrizosa, Memorandum from Montgomery County (MD) Office of Legislative Oversight to County Council, OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12, re: “Analysis of data Montgomery Traffic Violations Dataset,” October 25, 2022, <http://perma.cc/DQG6-VNXN>.

*Calculating racial disparities in traffic enforcement requires a benchmark to compare against the race of stopped drivers. In areas with dense populations, comparing race of drivers against census data is a valid method. Other benchmarks may be needed for sparsely populated places or those where disparities are slight.*

Frank R. Baumgartner, *Benchmarking Traffic Stop Data: Examining Patterns in North Carolina and the City of Raleigh* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 2022), working paper, <https://perma.cc/GUD5-QD2Y>.

*An analysis of moment-to-moment geolocation data from Florida rideshare drivers showed that despite no significant differences in speeding, crashes, or repeat traffic infractions, nonwhite drivers were between 24 and 33 percent more likely to be stopped for speeding than white drivers and paid 23 to 34 percent more in fines.*

Pradhi Aggarwal, Alec Brandon, Ariel Goldszmidt, et al., *High-frequency Location Data Shows that Race Affects the Likelihood of Being Stopped and Fined for Speeding* (Chicago: Becker Friedman Institute for Economics at the University of Chicago, 2022), working paper, <https://perma.cc/D3MA-WZPA>.

*The California Racial and Identity Profiling Advisory (RIPA) Board conducts annual analyses of all California traffic stops and has consistently found that Black and Latinx drivers are disproportionately stopped and searched despite being less likely than white drivers to be found in possession of contraband.*

California Office of the Attorney General, “RIPA Board Reports,” <https://oag.ca.gov/ab953/board/reports>.

## **Racial disparities in police stops are harmful.**

*When police stop, search, or arrest people, the encounters can negatively impact the physical and psychological health, educational attainment, economic security, and civic participation of individual people and entire communities. The harms increase as policing interactions become more intrusive and persistent.*

Aaron Stagoff-Belfort, Daniel Bodah, and Daniela Gilbert, *The Social Costs of Policing* (New York: Vera Institute of Justice, 2022), <https://www.vera.org/publications/the-social-costs-of-policing>.

*Persistent racial disparities in traffic stops, searches, and use of force by police can hurt individual drivers, community perceptions of safety, and community trust in law enforcement. These impacts are felt most in Black communities.*

Libby Doyle and Susan Nembhard, “Police Traffic Stops Have Little to Do with Public Safety,” Urban Institute, April 26, 2021, <https://perma.cc/UG9K-Z7X2>.

*An analysis of data from 2012 to 2018 from Hillsborough County, Florida, showed that traffic stops depressed voting turnout by 1.5 percentage points. The effect was smaller but still significant for Black drivers and was largest for midterm elections.*

Jonathan Ben-Menachem and Kevin T. Morris, “Ticketing and Turnout: The Participatory Consequences of Low-Level Police Contact,” *American Political Science Review* 117, no. 3 (2023), <https://perma.cc/7S3E-UJPS>.

# **MD SB0292 Jackson Testimony.pdf**

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Position: FAV





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New Hampshire, USA

Chief Thomas N. Thompson  
Ohio, USA

Supt. Richard Van Wickler, Ret.  
New Hampshire, USA

Det. Sgt. Neil Woods, Ret.  
Derbyshire, England, LEAP UK

Date: January 23, 2025

Re: SB 0292: Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence

Position: **SUPPORT**

To: The Maryland Judicial Proceedings Committee

Distinguished Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today in support of SB 292, Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence. This bill would require officers to document all reasons for traffic stops and limit enforcement of certain non-safety-related traffic violations to secondary actions. My name is Ed Jackson, and as someone who has dedicated over 30 years to public safety, including my time as Chief of Police in Annapolis and a 21-year career with the Baltimore Police Department, I believe this bill is a vital step toward improving law enforcement effectiveness and strengthening trust with the communities we serve.

LEAP is a nonprofit group of police, prosecutors, judges, and other criminal justice professionals who speak from firsthand experience serving in the justice system. Our mission is to make communities safer by focusing law enforcement resources on the greatest threats to public safety and working toward healing police-community relations.

Throughout my career, I have witnessed just how essential trust is to effective policing. Every interaction we have with the public carries weight, influencing whether individuals feel safe reporting crimes or cooperating with investigations. This trust is too often disrupted by unnecessary and harmful interactions, particularly with traffic stops that are not related to safety, typically for infractions like expired registrations or minor equipment issues.

**LawEnforcementActionPartnership.org**

*Formerly known as Law Enforcement Against Prohibition*

These sorts of stops disproportionately impact communities of color. [Studies](#) consistently show that Black drivers are more likely to be pulled over and cited for these violations and to be searched during stops, even though they are no more likely than white drivers to be carrying contraband. For many, the experience is not only frustrating, but often frightening. When individuals feel targeted, they lose trust in the police, which makes it harder for us to do our jobs effectively. Distrust in law enforcement leads to fewer reports of crimes, fewer cooperative witnesses, and a breakdown in the relationships that are vital to keeping communities safe.

Non-safety-related traffic stops also burden law enforcement and the broader justice system in ways that are hard to ignore. These stops often result in citations for minor infractions, diverting attention away from addressing serious crimes and road safety concerns. The vast majority of these stops yield no contraband, weapons, or evidence of criminal activity, calling into question their effectiveness as a policing tool. This cycle creates unnecessary strain on court systems, overburdens officers with low-priority enforcement duties, and places additional economic hardships on already marginalized communities.

Fortunately, SB0292 offers a clear solution. By requiring officers to clearly document the reasons for a stop, the bill ensures greater accountability and transparency in policing practices. Moreover, by limiting enforcement of minor, non-safety-related infractions to secondary actions, the legislation allows law enforcement to prioritize serious safety concerns. Together, these measures will strengthen public trust and make policing more efficient and effective.

Evidence from jurisdictions like [Philadelphia](#) and Minnesota, demonstrates that similar policies have led to reductions in racial disparities in traffic stops without compromising safety. For example, after implementing similar measures in Philadelphia, non-safety-related stops for Black drivers decreased by 54%, allowing officers to dedicate more attention to serious traffic violations and other crimes that threaten community safety.

Importantly, SB0292 does not take away essential tools from law enforcement. Officers will still be empowered to stop vehicles for primary offenses that impact public safety, such as reckless driving or DUIs. The documentation requirements of the bill further ensure fairness in traffic enforcement, providing communities with the data needed to foster accountability and trust.

As a law enforcement professional, I know that unnecessary traffic stops and low-level enforcement actions do not make our communities safer. Instead, they divert valuable resources, damage community trust, and increase the risk of harm for both officers and civilians. By passing SB0292, Maryland can lead the way in demonstrating that transparency, fairness, and public safety can go hand in hand.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

**LawEnforcementActionPartnership.org**

*Formerly known as Law Enforcement Against Prohibition*

Respectfully,

Chief Edward C. Jackson

Chief of Police

Annapolis Police Department

Speaker, The Law Enforcement Action Partnership

# **SB292\_FAV\_ACLUMD.pdf**

Uploaded by: Glenda Gonzalez

Position: FAV



## Testimony for the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 28, 2025

### SB 292 - Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence

#### FAVORABLE

SEBASTIAN BROWN  
PUBLIC POLICY CAMPAIGN  
STRATEGIST

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GENERAL COUNSEL

The ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report on SB 292, the Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence Act, which would make many minor non-safety-related traffic laws secondary violations, prohibiting them from being the sole reason for a traffic stop. Minor traffic violations include equipment violations like broken taillights, defective brake light, window tints and vehicle registration issues. SB 292 will help reduce risks of unnecessary traffic stops, decrease racial disparities in traffic enforcement and improve public safety.

Maryland has a long history of racial disparities in traffic enforcement. Statewide data from 2023 reveals that Black drivers constitute at least 43% of all vehicle traffic stops, despite only making up 30% of the state's population. Additionally, Black drivers are over four times more likely to be subjected to a warrantless vehicle search than white drivers.<sup>1</sup> These statistics indicate significant racial bias in traffic enforcement and reflect that Maryland is no exception to the national trend.<sup>2</sup>

Race-based disparities in the enforcement of low-level traffic infractions are frequently the result of pretextual traffic stops in which officers implicitly or explicitly hope that stopping a driver will yield evidence of criminal conduct, even though they don't have an

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<sup>1</sup> *Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard*. Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy.

<https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiazTBhNDYzMTMtZTRhMy00OWRkLTk3ZGI0ZmJlMGQ2OTRjMDQzIiwidCI6IjYwYWZlOWUyLTQ5Y2QtNDliMS04ODUxLTY0ZGYwMjc2YTJlOCJ9&pageName=ReportSection>

<sup>2</sup> Frank R. Baumgartner et al., *Racial Disparities in Traffic Stop Outcomes*, 9 Duke Forum for Law & Social Change 21, 22 (2017)

independent legal basis to make a criminal stop. This often leads police to prolonged stops by questioning drivers and pressuring them to consent to searches of their cars. As such, minor, non-safety related traffic stops pose serious risks to individuals' constitutional rights.

Pretextual traffic stops—which occur “on a massive scale,” are also dangerous and sometimes tragic.<sup>3</sup> Philando Castille, for example, was fatally shot after being stopped for a broken taillight. Tyre Nicholas was fatally beaten after police stopped him for a traffic violation that recordings indicated never occurred.<sup>4</sup> Here in Maryland in 2019, Demonte Ward-Blake was beaten by PGPD officers and paralyzed from the waist down after being stopped for an expired registration. Black men are twice as likely as white men to be killed by police.<sup>5</sup> Considering stops for equipment and registration-related violations alone make up about 44% of all traffic stops, avoiding these non-safety related traffic stops would have a significant impact on reducing unnecessary police interactions that may lead to tragedy.<sup>6</sup>

Moreover, these non-safety related traffic stops are not a necessary or effective crime-fighting tool. Police resources are better spent directed towards solving violent crime and addressing serious public safety risks. In 2022, 64 percent of violent crimes reported to police in Maryland were not solved.<sup>7</sup> Additionally, available data and various examples from other states show that reprioritizing traffic stops allows police to focus on dangerous driving, increasing traffic safety.

For the aforementioned reasons, the ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report on SB 292.

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<sup>3</sup> United States v. Cole, 21 F.4th 421, 437 (7th Cir. 2021) (Hamilton, J., dissenting)

<sup>4</sup> Loller, T., Mattise, J., & Sainz, A. (2023, February 9). *Tyre Nichols documents: Officer never explained stop to him*. AP News. <https://apnews.com/article/law-enforcement-tyre-nichols-memphis-3c20513e067d2f55786d8f42cf98b3c6>

<sup>5</sup> Frank Edwards et al., Risk of Being Killed by Police Use of Force in the United States by Age, Race-Ethnicity, and Sex, 116 Proc. Nat' Acad. Scis. 16793, 16794 (2019)

<sup>6</sup> *Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard*. Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. <https://app.powerbigov.us/view?r=eyJrIjoiaZTBhNDYzMTMtZTRhMy00OWRkLTk3ZGltZmJlMGQ2OTRjMDQzIiwidCI6IjYwYWZlOWUyLTQ5Y2QtNDliMS04ODUxLTY0ZGYwMjc2YTJlOCJ9&pageName=ReportSection>

<sup>7</sup> Dardeau, M & Salomon, N. (2024, January 23). *Violent Crime and Accountability Trends in Maryland*. Justice Center: The Council of State Governments. [https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/meeting\\_material/2024/jpr%20-%20133505047428207622%20-%20CSG%20Presentation.pdf](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/meeting_material/2024/jpr%20-%20133505047428207622%20-%20CSG%20Presentation.pdf)

## **SB 292 CCJR Favorable .pdf**

Uploaded by: Heather Warnken

Position: FAV



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB 292**

### **Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence: *Safer Traffic Stops for All***

TO: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: **Center for Criminal Justice Reform, University of Baltimore School of Law**

DATE: January 24, 2025

The University of Baltimore School of Law Center for Criminal Justice Reform supports community driven efforts to improve public safety and address the harm and inequity caused by the criminal legal system. In alignment with this mission, we offer our strong support of SB 292.

Traffic stops are one of the most common sources of interactions between members of the public and police, and non-safety related traffic stops make up the bulk of these stops. Non-safety related traffic stops refers to low-risk infractions that do not create a safety risk to those in or outside of the vehicle, such as broken taillight, expired registration or emission stickers. In the state of Maryland, according to the data, stops for non-safety related equipment and registration violations make up approximately 44% of all traffic stops, far more than moving violations and reckless driving.<sup>1</sup>

By making certain non-safety related traffic laws secondary violations as specified in the bill, SB 292 will simultaneously redirect police resources to more pressing public safety concerns, while also improving relationships between police and the community. This important reform will also promote racial equity by addressing a significant source of the pervasive racial disparities in Maryland's criminal justice system.

#### **I. Non-safety related traffic stops have no meaningful positive effect on public safety while perpetuating racial disparities and eroding systemic legitimacy**

A well-established body of research demonstrates that non-safety related stops improve neither road safety nor crime-fighting efforts. Studies demonstrate these stops seldom result in the

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<sup>1</sup> "Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard," Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, accessed August 13, 2024. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>.



recovery of illegal firearms, while distracting law enforcement from more targeted and evidence based policing strategies effective for addressing violent crime.

Moreover, 2023 data demonstrates that police stopped Black drivers in Maryland at rates 10 percent higher than White drivers.<sup>2</sup> Although Black people make up 30% of Maryland's population, they account for 43% of those stopped, and are far more likely to be searched and/or arrested during these interactions than their white counterparts.<sup>3</sup> These realities cause significant stress that is unequally borne by Maryland's Black drivers.

These dynamics erode trust between police and the communities they serve and the legitimacy of the criminal justice system overall. This is further damaged, often tragically, through preventable instances of use of force and other physically, economically, and psychologically distressing interactions between drivers and police. Given the numerous incidents documented in Baltimore and throughout the country, it is imperative that we act to limit unnecessary interactions with law enforcement, and the harassment and violence it too often leads to with impunity, especially when not captured on film. The distress caused by these types of interactions with police, disproportionately borne by Black Marylanders, has long been a significant impediment to community collaboration and trust.

## **II. Other jurisdictions across the country have demonstrated this reform can be implemented effectively and to important benefit**

Due to the volume of research demonstrating the problem and pointing to effective solutions, other jurisdictions throughout the country have begun embracing these reforms. For example, Virginia's Traffic Reform Law, which limits police authority to initiate stops for non-safety-related violations, led to a reduction in racial disparities in traffic enforcement by 19%.<sup>4</sup> Philadelphia's Driving Equality Bill, which reclassifies certain non-safety related infractions as secondary offenses and prohibits police from stopping drivers for these violations led to significant reductions in racial disparities with no negative impacts on traffic safety.<sup>5</sup>

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report on SB 292.

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<sup>2</sup> Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, [Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard](#), 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>

<sup>4</sup> [www.wtkr.com/news/politics/virginia-house-bill-would-reverse-law-limiting-minor-traffic-stops#:~:text=RICHMOND%2C%20Va.,for%20a%20minor%20traffic%20violation](http://www.wtkr.com/news/politics/virginia-house-bill-would-reverse-law-limiting-minor-traffic-stops#:~:text=RICHMOND%2C%20Va.,for%20a%20minor%20traffic%20violation).

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.phila.gov/media/20211109145453/executive-order-2021-06.pdf>.

# **SB0292\_HeidiRhodes\_JUFJ\_FAV\_FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Heidi Rhodes

Position: FAV

Heidi Rhodes  
Colesville in MD, 20904  
January 28, 2025



**TESTIMONY ON SB292 - POSITION: FAVORABLE**  
**Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

My name is Heidi Rhodes. I live in Colesville and I am a resident of District 14. I am submitting this testimony on behalf of Jews United for Justice (JUFJ) in support of SB 292, Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence. JUFJ organizes over **6,000 Jewish Marylanders and allies in support of local campaigns for social, racial, and economic justice.**

This bill will do two important things: it will limit the current police practices of non-safety-related traffic and other pretextual stops, and it will free limited police resources to focus on safety-related efforts.

Non-safety-related traffic stops disproportionately target and harm Black and brown communities, waste police resources by diverting their attention away from dangerous driving, and do not improve public safety. Rather, they expose police and drivers to violent encounters, and they produce racial disparities in traffic enforcement. In fact, studies show that Black drivers are stopped 20% more often than white drivers when these stops are allowed.

The most recent data about [road fatalities in Maryland](#) show that the persistent causes of dangerous driving were caused by speeding and aggressive driving, drug and alcohol impairment, distracted driving, and the failure to use seat belts. Allowing police to focus on these types of dangerous driving stops, rather than non-safety-related stops, would empower police to focus on implementing evidence-based road safety measures.

Passing this bill will allow Maryland to join jurisdictions around the country that have embraced this common-sense and data-driven approach to improve traffic safety, strengthen public safety and community trust, spare drivers and officers the dangers of unnecessary traffic stops, and reduce racial disparities in traffic enforcement. **On behalf of JUFJ, I respectfully urge the Senate to pass Bill SB 292.**

# **SB0292 Motor Vehicles--Secondary Enforcement and A**

Uploaded by: Jo Shifrin

Position: FAV

Jo Shifrin\_Bill SB0292\_Support  
Hearing Date: January 28, 2025

Jo Shifrin  
Bethesda, MD 20817

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF BILL SB0292**  
**Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

**TO:** Senator Will Smith, Chair, Senator Jeff Waldstreicher, Vice Chair, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

**FROM:** Jo Shifrin

**My name is Jo Shifrin. I am a resident of Bethesda. I am submitting this testimony in support of Bill SB0292, Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence.**

I am a retiree who moved to Bethesda to be near my grandchildren. My faith informs my belief in how society should treat its residents. *Tzedek Tirdof*, to pursue justice, means that I must try to make the world more fair for everyone and help everyone to live a safe and healthy life.

There is ample evidence that police officers, like many members of our society, experience racial bias. As a result, Black and brown residents of our state are disproportionately stopped by police. Often, these are pretextual stops, whereby the police use non-safety related reasons to stop a car in order to conduct a search of the vehicle in the hopes that they will find illegal drugs or weapons. These stops are considered non-safety related because they are based upon expired registrations, partially obscured license plates, littering, window tint, etc. which do not affect the safety of either the passengers of the vehicle or other drivers and passengers on the road. And these stops are not effective.

In 2022, in Montgomery County, Maryland, guns were found in less than one-half of one percent of the 36,000 stops made. In Maryland, stops for equipment and registration related violations make up about 44% of all stops. However, even if the police stop cars to enforce vehicle code violations, they risk causing as much harm as the pretextual stops do. These stops increase the physical and psychological harm to members of the Black community and can contribute to distrust of law enforcement. Moreover, these stops do not increase public safety nor do they effectively fight crime. They also divert police resources from serious safety concerns.

SB0292 will require that police officers document the reason for all stops. If a motorist is driving recklessly or speeding, SB0292 does not prevent the police from stopping a vehicle that is potentially risking the safety of everyone on the road.

Excluding non-safety related stops will achieve a number of important things. It will reduce racial disparities in traffic stops, thus creating a sense of fairness, especially in communities of color. It will promote safety and it will reduce community trauma. It will vastly improve community and policing relations, and it will allow the police departments to deploy their officers more effectively so that they can focus on more serious crimes.

Given the fact that there are so many vacancies on police forces, it seems more prudent to allocate limited police resources to the most serious crimes, including those involving motor vehicles. Rather than spending time stopping cars for a single burned out tail light, a cracked windshield, or a noisy muffler, wouldn't it be better for the police to focus on motorists who are speeding, driving aggressively, are obviously impaired or who are distracted while they drive?

I truly believe that SB0292 will benefit Maryland residents in a variety of ways, not least of which is by increasing traffic safety, public safety, and promoting equity.

**I urge the Judicial Proceedings Committee to support SB0292.**

## **SB292 - Favorable - SSJC Written Testimony .pdf**

Uploaded by: Joanna Silver

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB-292**  
**Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee, January 28, 2025**

My name is Joanna Silver. I am a resident of Silver Spring, in District 18. I am testifying on behalf of the Silver Spring Justice Coalition in support of SB-292 - Safer Traffic Stops for All.

The Silver Spring Justice Coalition is an organization of community members, faith groups, and civil and human rights organizations from throughout Montgomery County that works to reduce the presence of police in our communities; eliminate violence and harm by police; establish transparency and accountability; and redirect public funds toward community needs. Two years ago, we advocated with our County Council, along with many other members of our local community, in support of a bill called the Safety and Traffic Equity in Policing Act, which was similar in many respects to SB292.

After a successful public hearing in which 40 people submitted testimony in favor of the bill (and only 9 opposed), we were disappointed to learn that state law preempted our County from legislating in this critical area. For this reason, we are grateful to Senator Sydnor for sponsoring SB 292, which has the same aim as our local bill: to increase racial equity and public safety by prohibiting police from stopping people for non-safety-related traffic violations.

This Committee will hear data from many others about traffic stops and their impacts on racial equity and public safety state-wide and nationally, so I will focus my testimony on why this bill is so important for my County. Racial disparities in traffic enforcement have been a long-standing problem in Montgomery County. Over 20 years ago, the NAACP filed a complaint with the US Department of Justice alleging that the Montgomery County Police Department (MCPD) engaged in discriminatory traffic enforcement. That complaint led to [a memorandum of agreement](#) that ordered MCPD to collect and report data so that their discriminatory practices could be tracked.

A [report by our Council's Office of Legislative Oversight](#) (OLO), issued at the end of 2022, revealed that disparities in traffic enforcement persist and have even worsened in recent years. From 2018 to 2022, Black and Hispanic drivers were stopped, cited, searched, and arrested at rates far exceeding their representation in our population, while White and Asian drivers were stopped at rates far below their population numbers. While our police department repeatedly blames race-based



disparities in traffic enforcement on interlopers from Washington, D.C. and Prince George's County, this racist trope was disproved by the report's finding that 73% of stops were of County residents, and that race-based disparities were comparable for residents and non-residents.<sup>1</sup>

The OLO report also revealed that the greatest race-based disparities in traffic enforcement were seen for non-safety-related traffic violations. Violations under Titles 22 and 13, which are addressed by this bill, represented two of the four worst areas of race-based disparities in traffic enforcement. In fact, the report concluded that equipment violations had a racial disparity score that was 20 points higher than the racial disparity score for moving violations.

These disparities in traffic enforcement come at a high cost. This includes eroding community trust and compounding already existing race-based economic disparities.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, it is well documented that traffic stops can be dangerous and deadly,<sup>3</sup> with officers trained to anticipate danger and act aggressively to protect themselves. This is of particular concern to us because police use force against our BIPOC community members at far higher rates than White people. For example, in 2023, over 80% of use of force incidents in Montgomery County were against Black and Hispanic people.<sup>4</sup>

The risk that force and other harm will be visited upon Black and brown drivers is compounded by the fact that those drivers are far more likely to be detained and searched during a traffic stop. The Office of Legislative Oversight report on traffic stops in Montgomery County revealed that 74% of all searches taking place during a traffic stop were of Black or Hispanic community members.

Significantly, these searches rarely result in finding contraband. While using traffic enforcement to conduct criminal enforcement can occasionally yield results, it is a needle in a haystack approach that is extremely ineffective. In Montgomery County in 2022, 172 guns were seized during 35,000 traffic stops<sup>5</sup> – in other words, less than ½ of 1% of all traffic stops resulted in gun seizures. In years past, that percentage was even smaller.<sup>6</sup> Research from jurisdictions around the country reveals similar data, with contraband being seized during a very small percentage of traffic stops. I will not

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<sup>1</sup>[OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12](#), pp. 11-12.

<sup>2</sup>The Fines and Fees Justice Center Clearinghouse, <https://finesandfeesjusticecenter.org/>.

<sup>3</sup><https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/us/police-traffic-stops-killings.html>.

<sup>4</sup>Montgomery County Police Department [Annual Use of Force Report](#), 2023 at pg. 10.

<sup>5</sup>Briefing to the Transportation/Environment and Public Safety Committees of the Montgomery County Council, February 6, 2023, beginning at approximately minute 1:30:00. [https://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/player/clip/16676?view\\_id=169&redirect=true&ch=3eb410096b7046c63f6e892648d30832](https://montgomerycountymd.granicus.com/player/clip/16676?view_id=169&redirect=true&ch=3eb410096b7046c63f6e892648d30832)

<sup>6</sup>Policing Advisory Commission, [Findings and Recommendations for Traffic Enforcement](#), December 2021, at pp. 11-12.

repeat that data here as I know that many other national experts will be submitting testimony in which they will share that important information.

Instead, I will close by talking about why this bill is so important to public safety in Montgomery County. In 2023 we lost 45 people to fatal car crashes and there were almost 3900 crashes resulting in injuries.<sup>7</sup> The leading causes of those 45 fatalities were speeding and driving impaired. For comparison's sake, there were 29 homicides in Montgomery County in 2023, with only 18 committed with a firearm, and 233 non-fatal shootings.<sup>8</sup> SB292 will ensure that police in my County use their limited time and resources to target drivers engaged in the speeding, impaired, and reckless driving that so greatly increases the risks of traffic fatalities and injuries in our County. While we absolutely want police to address gun violence, and other crime, we want them to do it through careful and effective investigations, not through racially-biased fishing expeditions.

As you will hear from many others, SB292 will make Maryland part of a national movement, led in some jurisdictions by law enforcement itself, that recognizes that equity and safety can go hand in hand. My County was unable to join this movement because its legislators were preempted by state law. Given this, we ask you to use the power that state law delegates to you and respectfully urge you to issue a favorable report on SB292.

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<sup>7</sup>Maryland Department of Transportation, [Montgomery County Crash Summary](#), November 26, 2024.

<sup>8</sup>[MCPD Annual Crime Statistics, 2023](#), at p. 23.

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# **YPP Testimony on SB-292 Position\_ Favorable.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jordy Diaz

Position: FAV



Email: [admin@ypforprogress.org](mailto:admin@ypforprogress.org)

Website: [ypforprogress.org](http://ypforprogress.org)

Socials: [@ypforprogress](https://www.instagram.com/ypforprogress)

**Testimony to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
SB-292: Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence  
Position: Favorable**

January 28, 2025

The Honorable William Smith, Chair  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
11 Bladen St., Annapolis, Maryland: Room #2, East Miller Senate Office Building,  
Annapolis, Maryland, 21401  
cc: Members, Judicial Proceedings Committee

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jordy Diaz, and I am an Organizer with Young People for Progress (YPP), a member-based civic and social justice organization of youth and young adults in Montgomery County. We strongly support the introduction of SB-292, Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence, which we believe is a necessary step toward creating a more equitable and effective traffic enforcement system.

The SB-292 bill seeks to reclassify certain minor traffic infractions as secondary offenses. This means that police officers cannot stop drivers solely for these infractions, which include issues like driving with expired registration tags or tinted windows. The bill aims to reduce unnecessary traffic stops that disproportionately impact marginalized communities and divert law enforcement resources from more serious safety concerns.

As an organization deeply rooted in the experiences of young people of color, we are all too familiar with the harms caused by minor traffic stops. These encounters often lead to fear, financial hardship, and in some cases, unnecessary escalation. Unfortunately, the data shows that these stops disproportionately target Black and Brown drivers, exacerbating systemic inequities. From 2018 to 2022 in Montgomery County, Black drivers made up 30% of traffic stops and Latinx drivers 21%, despite comprising only 18% and 19% of the county's population, respectively.<sup>1</sup> These disparities heighten the risk of harm, as interactions with police during traffic stops can escalate unnecessarily, placing drivers—especially people of color—in situations of stress, fear, and even violence.

Moreover, these stops are largely ineffective in addressing public safety. Montgomery County data from 2022 shows that firearms were recovered in less than 0.5% of traffic stops.<sup>2</sup> This demonstrates that focusing on minor infractions, like a broken taillight or expired registration, diverts valuable law enforcement resources from addressing genuinely dangerous violations.

The approach proposed in this bill has been proven to work. For example, Fayetteville, North Carolina, deprioritized minor traffic stops and instead focused on serious safety violations. As a result, they saw a decrease in racial disparities in traffic enforcement without compromising

<sup>1</sup> OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12: Analysis of data Montgomery Traffic Violations Dataset, Montgomery County Council. (2022, October 25). [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2022\\_reports/OLOREport2022-12.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2022_reports/OLOREport2022-12.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> Discussion: OLO Memorandum Report 2022-21: Analysis of Date Montgomery County Traffic Violations Dataset, Montgomery County Council Transportation & Environment/Public Safety Committees. (2023, February 6). [https://www.youtube.com/live/y0d\\_5\\_FhGxo](https://www.youtube.com/live/y0d_5_FhGxo)

public safety outcomes.<sup>3</sup> This shows that we can adopt smarter, fairer traffic enforcement practices that focus on what truly matters: keeping our roads safe.

By reclassifying certain minor infractions as secondary offenses, this bill ensures that drivers are not stopped for issues that pose no immediate safety threat. It also strengthens accountability by requiring officers to document the reasons for each stop and provide identification to drivers, fostering transparency and trust.

Passing this bill is a critical step in addressing the long-standing disparities in our traffic enforcement system. It will help reduce harm to marginalized communities, rebuild trust in law enforcement, and ensure that our state's policies reflect the values of fairness, safety, and equity. Together, we can create a system that works for all Maryland residents.

I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on SB-292. Thank you for your time and commitment to public safety and equity.

Sincerely,  
Jordy Diaz  
Organizer, Young People for Progress

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<sup>3</sup> Fliss, M.D., Baumgartner, F., Delamater, P. et al. (2020). Re-prioritizing traffic stops to reduce motor vehicle crash outcomes and racial disparities. *Injury Epidemiology*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-019-0227-6>



# **safer traffic stops testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Katherine Head

Position: FAV

## **TESTIMONY IN FAVOR OF SB-292, SAFER TRAFFIC STOPS FOR ALL**

My name is Katherine Head, and I am a lifelong resident of Montgomery County. I am a student at Montgomery College and a member of several community organizations, including Young People for Progress and Democratic Socialists of America. I am writing to strongly urge you to support SB-292, "Safer Traffic Stops for All."

Traffic stops and consent searches have been and continue to be used as tools for racial profiling, and they disproportionately affect people of color. This is shown in my home county in a 2022 Office of Legislative Oversight Memorandum Report in Montgomery County: Black residents made up 18% of the county population but constituted 30% of the traffic stops in 2022. Once pulled over, drivers of color are also more likely to be subjected to a search than white drivers. In 2022, the same Memorandum Report showed that Black drivers accounted for 43% of searches at routine traffic stops, while Latinx drivers accounted for 31% and Asian and white drivers were underrepresented. These glaring disparities are evidence of the ongoing discrimination and bias that is perpetuated by our county police department. We must take swift, concrete action to make our community safer for everyone by passing Safer Traffic Stops for All.

Traffic stops can be incredibly dangerous, and even deadly, for Black and brown drivers. Between 2016 and 2021, a New York Times investigation found that police killed over 400 drivers and passengers who were not wielding a gun or knife, or under pursuit for a violent crime. Over one thousand people die at the hands of police every year, and roughly 10% of these lives are lost during traffic stops. This type of violence happens all over the United States and Maryland is not exempt. In March 2023, the family of 24 year old Demonte Ward-Blake in neighboring Prince George's county settled a police brutality lawsuit after an officer slammed Ward-Blake to the ground while he was handcuffed, breaking his neck and paralyzing him when he was pulled over for expired tags in 2019. Nationwide, Philando Castile, Samuel DuBose, Daunte Wright, and Tyre Nichols were all killed during traffic stops for minor violations. In Montgomery County, the 2022 Annual Use of Force Report stated that of the people subjected to police violence that year, an overwhelming 59% were Black. 28 of these instances of force occurred during traffic stops. Safer Traffic Stops for All can and will contribute towards preventing any more unnecessary injuries or deaths.

Additionally, for those already struggling with financial distress, routine traffic stops can have consequences far outweighing any minor infraction. Traffic fines and fees can be a significant burden for low-income individuals, and they can create cycles of debt and financial hardship. Furthermore, traffic stops can also result in more severe financial consequences, such as the loss of a job or inability to obtain employment. A traffic violation on a person's driving record can make it difficult to find employment in certain industries, particularly those that require a clean driving record or a driver's license. This can perpetuate economic inequality and further marginalize people of color. By reducing the number of unnecessary, non-safety related traffic stops and citations, our community can avoid the economic costs associated with traffic enforcement and redirect those resources towards other public services and programs.

Not only will this bill promote equity and justice, it will increase traffic safety. Many jurisdictions and police departments around the country have passed legislation like Safer Traffic Stops for All. These states and locales include Virginia, Oregon, Philadelphia, Pittsburgh, San Francisco, Seattle, West Hollywood, Memphis, and several police departments in Connecticut. It has been shown that deprioritizing low-level traffic stops may have a positive effect on traffic safety. Passing Safer Traffic Stops for All would allow police to focus limited police resources on more serious, safety-related issues such as speeding, running red lights, and talking on a cell phone while driving. Pulling people over for something like an air freshener hanging from their rear view mirror is a waste of police resources. This bill would help maximize police time and energy, and would help make our roads safer.

It is time for us to adopt policies that reflect the needs and concerns of our communities. We must acknowledge the racial disparities present in low-level, non-public safety related traffic stops. Prohibiting low-level traffic stops will help us build a more equitable and just society. We can do our part to prevent physical, psychological and financial harm by passing this crucial piece of legislation. We must prioritize the safety and well-being of Black and brown people in our community by limiting unnecessary interaction with the police that could potentially be unsafe. Maryland needs Safer Traffic Stops for All, so I urge you to support this important piece of legislation.



# **SB292 YDM Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mark Brewster

Position: FAV



# Young Democrats of Maryland

## **SB292– Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

**Judicial Proceedings Committee – 2/28/25**

### **SUPPORT**

Chairman Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on this priority bill for the Young Democrats of Maryland. YDM represents the next generation of Marylanders and seeks to advance policies which will allow Maryland youth to thrive.

Young Democrats of Maryland strongly support SB292, the Safer Traffic Stops for All Act. Data shows that younger and less experienced drivers, particularly young men of color, are more likely to be stopped by law enforcement. These interactions too often escalate into harmful or traumatic experiences that undermine trust in police, and carry long-term consequences for young people. This bill addresses these disparities by reclassifying non-safety-related traffic infractions as secondary offenses, preventing officers from stopping drivers for minor violations that do not pose immediate safety risks. This change is vital to protecting younger drivers, who are at heightened risk of negative interactions during traffic stops.

Additionally, research shows that men and younger adults, including adolescents, tend to engage in higher levels of risky or unlawful behaviors, which may lead law enforcement officers to pre-judge, and scrutinize younger men more closely during traffic stops compared to older individuals or women, [regardless of race or ethnicity](#). This additional scrutiny, combined with existing racial disparities in traffic stops, places younger Black and Latinx men at an even greater risk of being stopped by police. To ensure the safety of young people on the road, and law enforcement resources are being utilized most efficiently, this bill would be a crucial step forward in advancing these objectives. For these reasons, we respectfully ask for your support for SB292, and strongly urge a favorable committee report.

Mark Brewster II

YDM Vice President for Political Affairs

Chair, YDM Legislative and Policy Committee

## **SB0292 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and**

Uploaded by: Marlon Tilghman

Position: FAV

## SB0292 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence

On behalf of BRIDGE Maryland, Inc. we support SB0292 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence because *there is a time and season for all things. There is a time for searching and a time for repairing.* Sadly, there is tension between law enforcement and communities of color because of the data and listening sessions we've conducted statewide that indicate that traffic stops are more prevalent amongst Black and Brown people which would suggest racial profiling as the motivation for said stops. This bill seeks to repair relationships with law enforcement by reducing unnecessary contact with the police, thus giving law enforcement more time to address more serious criminal issues. Data also suggests that non-safety-related traffic stops make both officers and citizens safer because the tension that arises from racially motivated stops tends to end in injury or death to the officer or the citizen being stopped. This legislation can begin the healing process between police and citizens because it reduces the trauma and tension caused by said stops. As a black man, I can tell you that being stopped causes tension within me even when I know I have not committed a crime that would warrant anything more from me than my driver's license as a result of going past the speed limit. Thus, please vote in favor of SB0292 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence.

Sincerely,

Rev. Dr. Marlon Tilghman

Leader, BRIDGE Maryland, Inc. (A non-profit Interfaith Community Organizing in Baltimore City and five surrounding counties of Maryland)

# **1-28-25 SB 292 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcem**

Uploaded by: Nancy Soreng

Position: FAV



## **TESTIMONY TO THE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE**

### **SB 292 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

**POSITION: Support**

**BY: Linda Kohn, President**

**DATE: January 28, 2025**

The League of Women Voters supports a criminal justice system that is just, effective, equitable, transparent, and that fosters public trust at all stages, including policing practices. We support the elimination of systemic bias, including the disproportionate policing and incarceration of marginalized communities. Policing practices should promote safety for both law enforcement officers and the communities they serve.

**SB 292** outlines a comprehensive list of equipment infractions (secondary infractions) that do not pose a threat to driver safety. Traffic stops for non-safety related reasons have been [documented](#) to be more frequent among black drivers. A national study of nearly [100 million traffic stops](#) found that Black drivers were stopped more often than white drivers, relative to their share of the population.

According to a fact sheet put out by the Maryland Public Defenders Office, “stops increase the risk of physical, psychological, and economic harm, especially in Black communities. In addition to the social costs inherent in any interaction with the police, the frequency of these stops and their disparate impact on communities of color also compounds distrust in government institutions such as police and prosecutor offices, which depend on the public’s cooperation.”

We urge a favorable report on SB 292.

# **Final\_Rashad James Testimony in Support of SB 292.**

Uploaded by: Rashad James

Position: FAV



January 28, 2025

Rashad James  
209 Janwall Street  
Annapolis, MD 21403

### **Testimony before the Judiciary Proceedings Committee in Support of Senate Bill 292**

My name is Rashad James. I am a policy associate with a nonprofit organization that works with law enforcement agencies across the nation to make public safety systems more equitable and effective. I am also a Maryland resident and a member of the Maryland Bar.

I strongly support SB-292 because it prioritizes enforcement of traffic infractions that truly impact road safety—namely, causing crashes and traffic fatalities—versus non-safety equipment or registration issues. Currently, nearly half of all traffic stops in Maryland are based on these non-safety infractions, far outnumbering serious offenses like reckless driving.

I would like to share a personal experience that opened my eyes to the need for SB-292. Several years ago, I was a passenger when my father was stopped simply because of an air freshener hanging from the rearview mirror. Although the traffic stop was not too long and we were let go with a warning, it left us both somewhat anxious and confused as to why such a minor thing warranted a stop by law enforcement. Experiences like this have made me question how this kind of enforcement truly serves public safety, especially where there are far more serious violations that put people's lives at risk.

Unfortunately, experiences like ours are not unique. In Maryland, Black drivers make up 43% of all vehicle stops but only 30% of the population, and are four times more likely to be subjected to warrantless stops than White drivers.<sup>1</sup> In addition, Black and Latino drivers are more likely to have use of force used against them at non-safety stops than during safety stops.<sup>2</sup> These routine non-safety stops erode community trust, especially in communities of color. Moreover, data shows that low-level traffic stops rarely result in the recovery of weapons or contraband, but waste valuable time and resources that could be better used to address more serious safety

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<sup>1</sup> Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy. Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>

<sup>2</sup> Graham, M., Neath, S., Buchanan, K., Mulligan, K., et. al. Racial disparities in use of force at traffic stops. [https://policingequity.org/traffic-safety/83-data-brief-use-of-force-at-traffic-stops/file?utm\\_campaign=uof-ro undup-2024&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-\\_oadNhqJcxYZQjB6OWkPicHs5E6I4QwC3LG7yHN H8FszONdAVgKYrv3Q8nHtFBcJ\\_Kiuw\\_B5yr9EqWbNNfk7LTbGgp1eruRe5cJGj20z3hj0FDMz4&\\_hsmi=3 15048802&utm\\_source=hubspot](https://policingequity.org/traffic-safety/83-data-brief-use-of-force-at-traffic-stops/file?utm_campaign=uof-ro undup-2024&utm_medium=email&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-_oadNhqJcxYZQjB6OWkPicHs5E6I4QwC3LG7yHN H8FszONdAVgKYrv3Q8nHtFBcJ_Kiuw_B5yr9EqWbNNfk7LTbGgp1eruRe5cJGj20z3hj0FDMz4&_hsmi=3 15048802&utm_source=hubspot)

concerns.<sup>3</sup>

Police departments and commissions across the United States have recognized that enforcement of low-level traffic violations does not improve road safety and drives disparities. Fayetteville, NC; New Haven, CT and others have all started initiatives to reduce the number of low-safety-risk stops allowing officers to focus on the safety-related violations that impact road safety.

When Fayetteville, North Carolina's police department shifted their enforcement priorities, safety-related stops increased from 30% to 80% of all traffic stops, traffic fatalities dropped by 28%, racial disparities were significantly reduced, and crime remained the same.<sup>4</sup> Similar policy changes across the country have seen large increased numbers of stops that resulted in DUI arrests as well as lowered overall crime rates.<sup>5</sup>

With my background in policy and research, it is evident that these low-level stops do not improve public safety and instead contribute to racial disparities. As a Maryland resident, I do not want our state's limited resources diverted to practices that do not truly promote traffic safety or community well-being.

SB-292 will help to ensure that the efforts of law enforcement are actually focused on safety concerns while also strengthening trust between officers and the communities they serve. SB-292 is a change we need in Maryland and I urge you to support it.

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<sup>3</sup> Bandes, 2018. p. 1768; New Jersey Legislature Senate Judiciary Committee. (2006). Report of the New Jersey Senate Judiciary Committee's investigation of racial profiling and the New Jersey State Police. p. 55. [dspace.njstatelib.org/xmlui/handle/10929/25067](https://space.njstatelib.org/xmlui/handle/10929/25067)

<sup>4</sup> Fliss, M.D., Baumgartner, F., Delamater, P. et al. (2020). Re-prioritizing traffic stops to reduce motor vehicle crash outcomes and racial disparities. *Injury Epidemiology*, 7(3). <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40621-019-0227-6>

<sup>5</sup> Condon, T. (2022, January 31). After a poor start, CT anti-racial profiling effort is making progress. *Hartford Courant*. <https://www.courant.com/politics/hc-pol-racial-profiling-20220131-s3goxbcd5fgv7blw4uejfe7gte-story.html>; Ross, M. B., Kalinowski, J. J., & Barone, K. (2020). Testing for disparities in traffic stops: Best practices from the Connecticut model. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 19(4), 1289–1303. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1745-9133.12528>

# **PFPT Testimony in Favor of SB 292.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ruth Noel

Position: FAV

**Presbyterians for Police Transformation  
Takoma Park Presbyterian Church**

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 292  
Submitted to the  
Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee**

**January 28, 2025**

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify. As citizens of District 20 and 18 and as members of the Takoma Park Presbyterian Church organized as Presbyterians for Police Transformation, we want to indicate our strong support of Senate Bill 292, an Act concerning motor vehicles, secondary enforcement and admissibility of evidence.

We believe this legislation will improve public safety in at least three ways:

- by prioritizing policing of dangerous driving and serious traffic offenses, thereby increasing traffic safety and removing the burden on our police officers for enforcing non-safety-related infractions;
- by improving community trust of police and the rule of law; and
- by reducing the harm and trauma of individuals and families who are targeted in pretextual traffic stops.

Our church has an active racial justice initiative which helps inform our perspective on policing issues, as does the testimony of members of our congregation who are Black and whose families have experienced mistreatment from the police, including during pretextual traffic stops. We have seen first-hand, in our own community and congregation, that people of color are at greater risk of being stopped and searched, and that low level traffic stops exacerbate that disparity. We have also heard gripping and disheartening stories from our fellow congregants of the personal and family trauma resulting from pretextual and racial-profiled traffic stops.

While we're motivated by these experiences, our advocacy for the bill is guided by the data and research which reveal that states and cities with policies like those in SB 292 decrease racial disparities in traffic enforcement, result in fewer car crashes and traffic injuries/fatalities, and have little impact on non-traffic crime. The evidence shows that limiting non-safety-related traffic stops leads to improvements in traffic safety, reducing racial disparate outcomes, and does not lead to more crime. We urge you to examine the experience and data from Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and Virginia where similar policies have been enacted at the state, county, or municipal level. This is a successful policy and one that is growing across the country.

We are keenly aware of the strong support within our congregation, and indeed within the state and country, for traffic enforcement to keep our roads safe for pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. That is why we believe there is a smarter way to employ police for safety – by taking non-safety-related traffic enforcement off their plate so that police can focus their time and resources on

dangerous driving, including moving violations such as speeding, illegal turns, running red lights and stop signs, and reckless disregard for pedestrians.

Traffic stops are among the most common ways in which the public interacts with police. Traffic stop data at the national, state, county, and municipal levels show that police disproportionately stop people of color, often for pretextual reasons, and too often with devastating results. Thus, passage of this legislation would not only improve public safety but also decrease racial disparities. Importantly from an improved data collection and reporting perspective, the bill would require officers to document reasons for traffic stops on citations and police reports resulting from the stop.

The bill would helpfully expand the list of infractions that can be enforced only as secondary actions upon a stop predicated on dangerous driving violations. Broadly, this expanded list of secondary actions includes equipment issues -- such as a broken light or tinted window -- and administrative issues -- such as recently expired registration or license plate placement -- neither of which create an immediate safety risk to people inside and outside the vehicle. According to the Office of Crime Prevention and Policy's traffic safety dashboard, equipment and registration-related violations accounted for nearly 44 percent of traffic stops (over 200,000 annually) reported in 2022 and 2023, representing a significant amount of time that could be better spent dealing with dangerous driving and improving public safety.

In your discussions on the bill and its list of proposed secondary actions, we would urge that if there were any amendments to the bill as the legislative process continues, that any changes be evidence-based and not based on anecdotes. As more and more cities, counties, and states (including Virginia), adopt similar measures, there is a growing body of comparative law as well as outcome-based evidence to draw upon and we urge you to do just that.

In addition, if the Committee considers an amendment to create an exception clause when a clear and articulable case can be made for an immediate and serious threat to safety, we urge you to keep such language narrow and precisely tailored.

Finally, we urge you to retain the data collection and reporting provision in this bill. Without this provision, there will be less transparency and public accountability, both of which are vital to future reform efforts.

In sum, we urge you to pass this legislation. Doing so serves the cause of public safety and of racial equity.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify.

# **Maryland SB 292 Judiciary Proceedings Committee Te**

Uploaded by: Scarlet Neath

Position: FAV

January 24, 2025

**TESTIMONY OF THE POLICING PROJECT AT NYU SCHOOL OF LAW  
TO THE SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE OF THE STATE OF MARYLAND  
IN SUPPORT OF S.B. 292**

Dear Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members:

The Policing Project is an organization dedicated to ensuring democratic accountability in policing by giving communities and their elected representatives a voice in how law enforcement agencies operate. We believe that by democratically setting expectations *before* police act, instead of *after* something has gone wrong, we can achieve meaningful public safety for all people. We have advised police departments and elected officials in more than a dozen jurisdictions to create and adopt such policies in the traffic enforcement context. We have also conducted research on the public safety impacts of reducing low-risk traffic stops and drafted model state-level legislation to reduce pretextual traffic stops.

S.B. 292 is a common-sense measure that limits police enforcement of a series of non-safety violations, such as expired registrations, inspection or emission stickers, items hanging from the rearview mirror, or a missing headlight or taillight. At least 12 state or local governments have passed measures to limit similar non-safety stops, including Virginia and Oregon. We urge this Committee to support this important measure, which will make Maryland's roads safer and more just.

Data from Maryland confirms what has been shown across the country: traffic stops are frequently made for low-level violations unrelated to road safety. These non-safety stops are often initiated because of goals unrelated to road safety: either as a pretext to conduct a search to find crime, or to increase the local government's revenue by writing more total citations. But neither of these reasons contribute to effective policing. Evidence is clear that randomly stumbling upon serious crime during a traffic stop is a rarity. And relying upon quantity of traffic tickets in order to reward performance or generate revenue, no matter their relevance to crash outcomes, incentivizes policing for profit rather than safety.

Non-safety stops do little to make roadways safer, use limited police resources inefficiently, fuel racial discrimination, and undermine public safety. In [2023](#), about 44% of traffic stops in Maryland were made for reasons related to equipment, license, or registration violations, while just 13% were made for moving violations or reckless driving. But Maryland's Highway Safety Office [reports](#) that speed, aggressive driving, distracted driving, and impaired driving are the major contributors to crashes and fatalities – not dark window tint or broken windshield wipers. By spending so much of their limited time on minor, non-safety violations, Maryland officers are missing the opportunity to stop truly dangerous behaviors on the road.

Traffic policing that relies on low-level stops is inefficient in other ways, as well. Traffic stops for non-safety offenses are less likely to result in an arrest made than stops related to the leading causes of crashes: speeding and dangerous driving. In addition, the pretextual motivations for many of these stops lead to inefficiency. Unsurprisingly, when police search for crimes based on a specific reason, rather than an unfounded or biased hunch, they are [more successful](#) in that endeavor.

Focusing traffic enforcement on non-safety stops also results in disproportionately policing drivers of color. Stops for non-safety equipment and paperwork reasons in Maryland, as well as throughout the country, have greater racial disparities. Coupled with the fact that non-safety stops are [more likely](#) to end in police use of force than safety stops, this signals an urgent need for change. Indeed, a recent [report](#) found that racial disparities in Montgomery County Police Department traffic stops have persisted or worsened between 2018 and 2022.

Low-level traffic stops don't move the needle on roadway safety, and they don't move the needle on broader public safety, either. The Policing Project [studied](#) traffic stops in Nashville, Tennessee where just 0.7% of stops resulted in an arrest for something that might have an impact on future crime. The Nashville Police Department reduced its traffic stops for non-moving violations significantly, with crime rates remaining unchanged. In addition, people who have recently been stopped are significantly [less likely](#) to report neighborhood problems to law enforcement.

Other jurisdictions—such as [Fayetteville, North Carolina](#), [St. Paul, Minnesota](#), [Philadelphia](#), [Los Angeles](#), [Seattle](#), and several [Connecticut cities](#)—have shown that limiting traffic stops for non-safety offenses is associated with reduced racial disparities in police contact, increased arrests for moving violations, fewer serious crashes, and either unchanged or reduced crime rates.

By creating clear guidelines on how and when officers may conduct traffic stops, S.B. 292 makes significant strides towards more effective and equitable policing. We thank the Committee and the Chair for their consideration of this important piece of legislation.



# **2025-SB 292-Secondary Enforcement-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Seth Grimes

Position: FAV

SB 292 – FAVORABLE  
Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 28, 2025

Chair Smith and Committee Members,

I support SB 292, which would, among its provisions, authorize a police officer to enforce certain provisions of the Maryland Vehicle Law only as a secondary action and require an officer document all reasons for a traffic or other stop. The provisions that would be secondary include certain registration violations, vehicle-operation infractions and equipment and noise violations that do not immediately threaten public safety.

This change will allow officers to focus on infractions and violations that, unlike the proposed secondary-action provisions, immediately threaten public safety. And SB 292 will redress enforcement disparities, the demonstrated over-enforcement directed at Black and Brown drivers.

Before addressing the second point, let's stress that the infractions that would be designed secondary – registration and minor operating and equipment violations – do not immediately threaten public safety.

We envision a just transportation system, however police traffic enforcement is manifestly unequal and therefore unjust. For instance, Montgomery County County's Office of Legislative Oversight (OLO) has found severe racial disparities in police traffic enforcement. The October 2022 OLO Memorandum Report 2022-12<sup>1</sup> notably states,

*"Black drivers accounted for a higher percentage of traffic stops (30%) than the percentage of the adult population that is Black (18%)."*

The OLO further reports,

*"Data show that Black drivers accounted for 43% of searches and 38% of arrests during traffic stops, while Black adults account for 18% of the County's adult population. Similarly, Latinx drivers accounted for 31% of searches and 35% of arrests, while Latinx adults accounted for 19% of the County's adult population."*

Traffic stops can be dangerous and deadly, with officers trained to anticipate danger and act accordingly. In Montgomery County, police use force against Black and brown people at far higher rates than white people – 80% of all use-of-force incidents in 2022 – likely placing the individuals mostly likely to be stopped at even greater risk of harm. Additionally, fines and penalties disproportionately affect and punish individuals who are struggling financially.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2022\\_reports/OLORReport2022-12.pdf](https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2022_reports/OLORReport2022-12.pdf)

The disparities experienced in Montgomery County extend statewide and persist throughout Maryland.

Further, I believe that rather than stopping drivers for non-safety related violations, the State should focus on effective and equitable steps to boost safety including redesigning roadways and accelerating adoption of automated enforcement.

I ask a favorable reading for SB 292 and thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Seth Grimes

7300 Willow Avenue  
Takoma Park, MD 20912

# **SB 292 - FAV - JPR - OPD - Levi and Holmes.pdf**

Uploaded by: Tia Holmes

Position: FAV



**NATASHA DARTIGUE**  
PUBLIC DEFENDER

**KEITH LOTRIDGE**  
DEPUTY PUBLIC DEFENDER

**MELISSA ROTHSTEIN**  
CHIEF OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

**ELIZABETH HILLIARD**  
DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT RELATIONS

## **POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**BILL: Senate Bill 292 - Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

**FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender**

**POSITION: Favorable**

**DATE: January 28, 2025**

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The Maryland Office of the Public Defender respectfully requests that the Committee issue a favorable report on SB 292.

The Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this esteemed body to confront our unfortunate reality that unnecessary traffic stops in Maryland disproportionately impact Black drivers and contribute to inequities in policing. But unnecessary traffic stops don't just fuel racial disparities in policing, they also create a dangerous risk of escalation that can lead to harm and even death for community members and for law enforcement.

Traffic stops are one of the most common interactions between law enforcement and the public and they are dangerous. Vehicle incidents are the second highest cause of law-enforcement-related deaths in Maryland. Since 2021, there have been 62 law-enforcement-related deaths in Maryland; 30% of those deaths involved traffic stops and all of those deaths could have been avoided. It is time for Marylanders to reframe how we approach traffic enforcement—we must prioritize public safety while reducing the number of opportunities for biased policing.

SB 292, the Safer Traffic Stops for All bill, does just that by reclassifying non-safety-related violations, like expired tags or single broken taillights as secondary offenses rather than primary ones. In other words, the bill makes it so certain low-level violations will only be enforceable after a stop for a more serious, safety-related violation. Making this change allows law enforcement to focus on actual safety threats while also reducing opportunities for biased policing.

As we confront a significant statewide budget deficit, these reforms also allow us to redirect resources to address more critical safety issues, enhancing both public safety and community trust.

Other jurisdictions, such as Philadelphia, have already enacted similar legislation, resulting in a significant reduction in biased stops without compromising road safety. Virginia's traffic reform law has reduced racial disparities in traffic enforcement by 19% and Minnesota's Lights On! Program provides repair vouchers instead of citations for equipment-related violations. Similar changes are long overdue in Maryland. It's well past the time for us to follow suit and pass the Safer Traffic Stops for All bill to ensure that traffic enforcement works for all Marylanders, regardless of race.

**For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 292.**

**Submitted by: Maryland Office of the Public Defender, Government Relations Division.**  
**Authored by: Deborah Katz Levi and Tia Holmes, [Deborah.Levi@Maryland.Gov](mailto:Deborah.Levi@Maryland.Gov);**  
**[Tia.Holmes@Maryland.gov](mailto:Tia.Holmes@Maryland.gov).**

## **25.01.28 MCPA-MSA\_SB 292 SECONDARY ENFORCEMENT AN**

Uploaded by: Samira Jackson

Position: UNF



# Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

## Maryland Sheriffs' Association



### MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair and  
Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee  
Samira A. Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: January 28, 2025

RE: **SB 292: Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

POSITION: **OPPOSED**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **oppose** SB 292.

SB 292 reclassifies several moving violations as subject to only secondary enforcement by Maryland police officers. Violations that would no longer be a primary offense include operating an unregistered motor vehicle with a cancelled, suspended, or revoked vehicle registration, operating a motor vehicle with expired registration, and knowingly permitting the operation of an unregistered motor vehicle. Certain moving violations that will no longer be a primary offense include littering, refusing to remove wrecked or damaged vehicles from a highway, and spinning of wheels. Equipment violations reduced to a secondary offense related to the safe operation of a motor vehicle include malfunctioning or missing safety equipment such as headlights, tail lights, and rearview mirrors, amongst other offenses.

This bill also requires a police officer to document all reasons for a traffic stop on any citation or report. This requirement will compel an officer to cite a violator for each and every violation observed in order to clearly justify the legal reason for the stop. Discretion will no longer apply in which an officer may forgo a speeding violation, where points apply, for a lesser violation. Otherwise, the officer is left in the perilous position of having to defend the reasons for the traffic stop. One would hardly consider it fair to "load up" the citation counts to meet this burden. This provision is tacitly unfair to the general motoring public and will only serve to exacerbate mistrust. Furthermore, this provision subjects law enforcement to potential disciplinary action for an inadvertent and unintentional oversight when writing their citation. Again, this requirement forces officers to cite for every violation that is observed, which places a burden on the officer, in order to legally justify the initial stop.

Finally, the suggestion that an officer who makes a traffic stop in violation of this bill may be subject to administrative discipline reads as an unwarranted attack on our law enforcement community who are charged with keeping our communities and our highways safe. Adding insult to injury is the provision that **ANY** evidence obtained in violation is inadmissible in **ANY** trial or other proceeding [Emphasis added]. There is not a need to disallow the admission of evidence in violation of this bill's reporting



requirements, as Maryland already has established standards under the exclusionary laws of both the United States Constitution, the Maryland Constitution, and the Declaration of Rights.

SB 292 if enacted as written, would have unintended consequences of undermining police enforcement of vehicle theft laws because operating a vehicle with license registration plates removed would not authorize a *primary* traffic stop. The results of such an attempt would not be admissible in a criminal prosecution, due to the bill's exclusionary provisions, a remedy usually reserved for 4<sup>th</sup> amendment constitutional violations.

In 2019, the Maryland General Assembly passed the first Vision Zero legislation with the belief that crashes are preventable and views zero as the only acceptable number of motor vehicle deaths. The law set a goal of zero motor vehicle-related fatalities or serious injuries by 2030. The following data provides substantive evidence that Maryland is failing in achieving this goal.

	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	5-Year Average
Fatal Crashes	496	546	524	534	577	535
Injury Crashes	32,938	25,360	28,142	28,027	28,577	28,609
Property Damage Crashes	82,583	69,728	80,243	79,908	81,247	78,742
Total Crashes	116,017	95,634	108,909	108,469	110,401	107,886
Total of All Fatalities	535	573	563	566	621	572
Total Number Injured <sup>1</sup>	48,682	36,790	40,858	40,719	41,538	41,717

The MCPA and MSA fully support highway safety efforts, citing the following:

1. **Promoting road safety:** Violations like broken headlights or expired tags can directly impact road safety. Broken headlights can reduce a driver's visibility, making nighttime driving more dangerous for both the driver and others on the road. Stopping drivers for these reasons can address safety risks early.
2. **Deterrence of further violations:** Allowing officers to stop drivers for these types of violations serves as a deterrent. When people know that minor infractions, such as an expired tag, could result in a traffic stop, they may be more inclined to keep their vehicles properly registered and maintained.
3. **Preventing larger violations:** Some minor violations could be indicators of other potential issues, such as unlicensed or uninsured vehicles, exposing innocent vehicle operators or passengers to the risk of suffering personal physical injury or property damage by the operator of an unregistered vehicle without required automobile liability insurance. By stopping drivers for violations for expired tags, officers often uncover more serious violations, such as a lack of insurance or a suspended license, which could prevent unsafe drivers from operating vehicles.
4. **Enforcing legal requirements:** Rules of the road should be enforced consistently. If traffic laws are established and enforced uniformly, it can send a clear message that following these regulations is important for everyone. If expired tags and broken headlights are allowed to go unchecked, it could create a sense that certain traffic laws are unimportant.
5. **Supporting the vehicle registration system:** Vehicle registration and inspection systems are established to ensure that only roadworthy and legal vehicles are on the road. If expired tags

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<sup>1</sup> <sup>1</sup>Zero Deaths Maryland, Maryland Highway Safety Office, Maryland Crash Data, <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>

aren't addressed directly through primary stops, the system's effectiveness in maintaining vehicle safety and registration compliance could be reduced.

6. **Preventing future problems for the driver:** Often, drivers with expired tags or broken headlights are unaware of the violation, or they may not have the means to address it immediately. A traffic stop gives officers the chance to inform the driver of the issue and allow them the opportunity to correct it. This proactive approach can be seen as an educational opportunity to ensure that drivers are aware of violations and can take corrective action.
7. **Apprehension of violent offenders:** Timothy McVeigh, Ted Bundy, John Allen Muhammad, David Berkowitz, Rodney Alcala, Robert Ben Rhoades, Andrew Cunanan, Mark Allen Smith, Angel Resendiz, and Shawn Grate, murderers, rapists, serial killers, all apprehended as a result of traffic stops, excellent work by dedicated law enforcement officers.

Permitting violations as previously enumerated to remain as primary reasons for traffic stops serves a mix of public safety, law enforcement, and preventive goals, ensuring that traffic laws are enforced fairly and that potential risks are addressed before they lead to the horrendous accidents that we witness regularly on our highways.

Because passage of this bill would undermine enforcement of many of Maryland's mandatory vehicle operation standards, the Maryland Chiefs of Police Association and Maryland Sheriffs' Association **oppose** SB 292.

# **2025\_01\_28 SB 292 - Support in Concept.pdf**

Uploaded by: Anthony Brown

Position: INFO

**CAROLYN A. QUATTROCKI**  
*Chief Deputy Attorney General*

**LEONARD J. HOWIE III**  
*Deputy Attorney General*

**CARRIE J. WILLIAMS**  
*Deputy Attorney General*

**ZENITA WICKHAM HURLEY**  
*Chief, Equity, Policy, and Engagement*



**PETER V. BERNIS**  
*General Counsel*

**CHRISTIAN E. BARRERA**  
*Chief Operating Officer*

**STATE OF MARYLAND  
OFFICE OF THE ATTORNEY GENERAL**

**ANTHONY G. BROWN**  
*Attorney General*

January 24, 2025

Sent by Electronic Mail

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair  
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

*Re: Senate Bill 292 - Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence (SUPPORT IN CONCEPT)*

Dear Chair Smith:

The Office of the Attorney General supports Senate Bill 292 - Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence in concept.

**Background**

Traffic stops can be dangerous for law enforcement and citizens alike. From the side of law enforcement, officers have been injured and killed when they or their vehicles are struck during a traffic stop. According to the National Law Enforcement Officers Memorial Fund, between 2014-2023, 150 officers were killed by being struck by a vehicle and 292 officers were killed in automobile crashes.<sup>1</sup> A U.S. Department of Transportation study found that traffic-related incidents, including vehicle crashes, are one of the leading causes of death for law enforcement officers, with 39% of law enforcement officers killed in the line of duty killed in traffic-related

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<sup>1</sup> <https://nleomf.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/Causes-of-Law-Enforcement-Deaths-2014-2023.pdf> and <https://nleomf.org/memorial/facts-figures/officer-fatality-data/causes-of-law-enforcement-deaths/>.

incidents.<sup>2</sup> According to the FBI, motor vehicle accidents were the leading cause of accidental officer deaths in 2024.<sup>3</sup>

Traffic stops can be similarly dangerous for citizens. Far too many people, especially minorities, have been killed or injured by police during traffic stops. These include high-profile cases, such as Daunte Wright, Tyre Nichols, and Philando Castile, but also too many that we have not heard about. A Stanford University nationwide analysis of traffic stops between 2011-2016 found that police pull over 20 million motorists a year, amounting to a staggering 50,000 traffic stops per day.<sup>4</sup> A 2021 investigation by the New York Times revealed that over a five-year period, 400 drivers or passengers were killed by police during traffic stops, not counting those who were armed or under pursuit for a violent crime.<sup>5</sup>

There are undeniable racial disparities in traffic stops. Stanford's data showed that officers stopped black drivers at higher rates than white drivers. Once stopped, Stanford found that in nearly every jurisdiction studied, officers searched black and Hispanic drivers more often than white drivers. A study by the Vera Institute of Justice looked at traffic stops in Suffolk County, Massachusetts, from 2010-2019, and found that police there pulled over black drivers at 2.3 times the rate of white drivers for non-traffic-safety reasons.

When law enforcement makes traffic stops for purely non-safety reasons, the risk of the traffic stop often is not worth the reward. The Vera Institute study noted that many jurisdictions, including Virginia, Oregon, Los Angeles, Philadelphia, Seattle, Mecklenburg County (North Carolina), and Berkeley (California), have recently limited police stops for minor infractions, dramatically lowering the proportion of traffic stops for non-safety reasons. For example, in Los Angeles, after the policy took effect, stops for non-moving violations went from 21% of all stops to 12% of all stops.<sup>6</sup>

Reducing the number of non-safety related traffic stops and the racial disparity they foster is an important goal, which is why I support Senate Bill 292 in concept. Several amendments are necessary, however, to strike the appropriate balance with public safety. In a civil society, anyone wishing to drive must follow the rules of the road. This includes having vehicles tagged, properly registered and insured, as well as having the vehicle in a safe, working condition.

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<sup>2</sup> <https://news.maryland.gov/msp/2022/09/30/maryland-state-police-reminding-motorists-move-over-law-expands-to-all-vehicles-beginning-oct-1/>.

<sup>3</sup> [https://le.fbi.gov/cjis-division/cjis-link/statistics-on-law-enforcement-officer-deaths-in-the-line-of-duty-from-january-through-august-2024#:~:text=Accidental%20law%20enforcement%20deaths%20increased,motor%20vehicle%20accidents%20\(17\)](https://le.fbi.gov/cjis-division/cjis-link/statistics-on-law-enforcement-officer-deaths-in-the-line-of-duty-from-january-through-august-2024#:~:text=Accidental%20law%20enforcement%20deaths%20increased,motor%20vehicle%20accidents%20(17).).

<sup>4</sup> <https://openpolicing.stanford.edu/findings/>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/31/us/police-killings-traffic-stops-takeaways.html>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.latimes.com/california/story/2022-11-14/minor-traffic-stops-plummet-in-months-after-lapd-policy-change>.

### **Conceptual Amendment #1**

This bill changes a number of genuine safety-related offenses from primary to secondary violations. Unsafe lane change, not displaying headlights at night, vehicles missing side view and rear view mirrors, failing to yield to a vehicle with the right of way, throwing hazardous or injurious materials from a vehicle, driving a vehicle in an unsafe condition that endangers a person, and altering a vehicle to remove or alter a safety device or render the vehicle dangerous in the event of a collision are all safety-related offenses. We must continue to do what we can to empower law enforcement to intervene when vehicles are being driven in an unsafe manner. These are also violations that officers use to identify drunk and drugged drivers, who cause crashes that kill 37 people every day.

Senate Bill 292 also makes driving an unregistered vehicle, a vehicle with a revoked, suspended, canceled, or unpaid registration, or a vehicle with no license plates or displaying the license plate of another vehicle a secondary offense. These offenses are safety-related for two reasons. First, unregistered vehicles are seldom insured, so police must be able to keep unregistered vehicles off the roadway. Second, having vehicles properly registered and tagged is essential to investigate crime. Suspects are often identified through a witness or an officer observing, or surveillance video capturing, a vehicle's tag number. Without proper registration and license plates, police have no way of identifying the driver of a vehicle involved in a hit-and-run, or other serious crime.

In Philadelphia, the 2022 "Achieving Driving Equality Act" made eight traffic violations into secondary violations.<sup>7</sup> These include having an unregistered vehicle if the vehicle had been properly registered within the prior 60 days, improperly displaying a temporary registration plate where the plate is still clearly displayed, failing to securely fasten a plate but where the plate is otherwise clearly displayed, having only a single brake light or single head light not illuminated, having an obstruction, such as a sign, poster, or other item, including ice or snow, failing to have bumpers, driving a vehicle without the required inspection certificate, and driving a vehicle without evidence of an emission inspection. These are the types of non-safety related offenses that Maryland's bill should cover. Senate Bill 292 covers far too many safety-related offenses.

### **Conceptual Amendment #2**

Currently traffic stops are the main enforcement mechanism of the MVA's administrative requirements of vehicles. For example, vehicle registration suspension is the penalty for failing to comply with emissions requirements. If we remove the ability to pull over a vehicle whose registration has been suspended, there is no incentive for drivers to comply with the requirements. For secondary offenses, the bill should create a procedure by which law enforcement who observe a violation would contact the MVA and have the MVA issues citations or repair orders through the mail. Like a speed camera ticket, this would allow the enforcement of the laws but eliminate the unnecessary—and sometimes unsafe—traffic stop. The bill could also be amended to provide

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<sup>7</sup> <https://phila.legistar.com/LegislationDetail.aspx?ID=5007830&GUID=065348E0-F4F6-4B6A-A088-DF5358E73CD&Options=ID%7CText%7C&Search=210636&FullText=1>.

that if these citations or repair orders are ignored, the MVA could impose sanctions such as prohibiting renewal of driver's licenses and vehicle registration until the issues are addressed.

Relatedly, law enforcement officers cannot ignore multiple, flagrant violations of our transportation laws. While a single secondary violation may not be a safety issue, multiple violations signal a driver who is unwilling to comply with rules of the road. Our law enforcement officers must be able to make traffic stops to keep the community safe. The bill should be amended to allow for a traffic stop if an officer observes more than one secondary violation.

### **Conceptual Amendment #3**

Senate Bill 292 amends § 2-109 of the Criminal Procedure Article to require an officer to state “all reasons for a traffic stop” in any “police report” from that stop. Often, especially in long-term investigations, such as the ones handled by the Office of the Attorney General’s Organized Crime Unit, officers conduct traffic stops based not only on a safety violation but also because they have information from victims and witnesses identifying the driver as a suspect in a violent crime. It would endanger officers, victims, and witnesses if the police always had to tell the suspect every single reason for a traffic stop. Senate Bill 292 should be amended to say that an officer must tell the driver only every traffic violation that formed the basis for the traffic stop.

### **Conceptual Amendment #4**

Fourth, under current law, while the failure of an officer to identify himself, his agency, his identification number, and the reason for the traffic stop may be grounds for internal disciplinary action, it cannot be grounds to suppress evidence found during the stop. This bill states that failing to make those identifications *may* be grounds to suppress any evidence recovered during the stop. Not only does this risk excluding guns or other evidence of violent crimes based on a minor violation, Senate Bill 292 fails to identify any guidelines for how courts should determine when this evidence should be excluded. This extreme sanction lacking in parameters should be removed from the bill.

We applaud Senate Bill 292 for seeking to limit non-safety related traffic stops and reduce racial disparities in Maryland’s criminal justice system. However, we urge the Committee to carefully consider the concerns outlined above as it deliberates this critical issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "AG Brown".

Anthony G. Brown

## **SB0292 – MVA, MDTA - LOI - Motor Vehicles - Secon**

Uploaded by: Matt Mickler

Position: INFO



January 28, 2025

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings  
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 292 – Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 292 and offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 292 would reclassify several types of moving violations as subject to only secondary enforcement by Maryland police officers. Among these types of moving violations that would no longer be a primary offense include failure to display valid vehicle registration plates and tabs, malfunctioning or missing safety equipment such as headlights and taillights, failure to use a turn signal when changing lanes or making a turn from a roadway, littering from a vehicle, and certain other offenses. Failure to comply with this requirement may be grounds for administrative disciplinary action against the officer, and any evidence obtained in violation of the stop shall be inadmissible in any trial or other proceeding.

Currently, the primary enforcement mechanism in Maryland for matters such as valid vehicle registration, rules of the road, and vehicle equipment is action by law enforcement in the State. The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) relies on referrals by law enforcement for repair orders when vital equipment such as headlights are identified as inoperable. Maintaining compliance with the Federal Clean Air Act via the Vehicle Emissions Testing Program (VEIP) and enforcement of vehicle operation laws such as speed limits and traffic safety signals using automated enforcement devices require vehicles to be properly registered.

When a vehicle fails to meet its VEIP testing obligations, the MVA will issue warnings and eventually suspend registration on the vehicle. A vehicle cannot renew its registration until it is brought into testing compliance. Similarly, unpaid automated enforcement citations will prevent renewal of registration of a vehicle if the jurisdiction operating the system issues a flag notice to the MVA. Failure to rectify repair orders for defective or inoperable equipment such as headlights or turn signals also impacts an owner's ability to maintain or renew vehicle registrations.

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.  
Page Two

SB 292 limits the means by which Marylanders are compelled to comply with vehicle registration requirements and safe driving behavior because it removes a vital element for enforcing these requirements. Removing law enforcement's authority to perform traffic stops that cite drivers operating vehicles with expired or no registration, inoperable safety equipment, or unsafe driving behaviors will limit the referrals to the MVA for rectifying these impediments – this has a direct impact on the safety and condition of Maryland roadways. All of these important measures contribute to Maryland's compliance with federal law, efforts to reach zero roadway deaths by 2030, and ensure safe and well-maintained transportation infrastructure in the State.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 292.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Mickler  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090

# **MEJC Written Testimony Informational in Support of**

Uploaded by: MECJ Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative

Position: INFO



## **POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**BILL: Senate Bill 292 – Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence**

**FROM: Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative**

**POSITION: INFORMATIONAL – SUPPORT IN CONCEPT**

**DATE: January 28, 2025**

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The Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative supports the goal of Senate Bill 292 to reduce unnecessary interactions between the public and law enforcement and address racial disparities within Maryland’s criminal legal system by limiting non-safety related traffic stops by law enforcement.

### **About the Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative**

The Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative (MEJC) was established by the Office of the Attorney General (OAG) and the Office of the Public Defender (OPD) to address racial disparities in mass incarceration in Maryland. This initiative is the first of its kind. It was developed based on listening sessions held by the Attorney General and Public Defender with impacted people, advocates, and other community members. Academic partners, including the Judge Alexander Williams Center for Education, Justice & Ethics at the University of Maryland at College Park and the Bowie State University Institute for Restorative Justice, were brought in to ensure the work is evidence-based and data-driven statewide.

The MEJC comprises over 40 representatives from state agencies, community groups, subject matter experts, and people directly impacted by the system. Its initiatives are organized into workgroups focusing on various factors influencing incarceration rates. Each workgroup is led by a staff member from the Office of the Attorney General, a staff member from the Office of the Public Defender, and a community advocate with relevant expertise. Community voices and public input have shaped the recommendations developed under the direction of the OAG and

OPD. In December 2024, the MEJC approved 18 recommendations for legislative and agency reforms, program development, data collection, and other measures designed to reduce the mass incarceration of Black men and women and other marginalized groups in Maryland prisons and jails. Recommendation No. 2 urges the Maryland General Assembly to enact legislation to end non-safety-related traffic stops, enhance data reporting requirements and include data on race and gender, re-examine the use and efficacy of consent searches to reduce unnecessary interactions with police, and allow for more appropriate utilization of law enforcement.

### **The Scope of Racial Disparities in Maryland**

Racial disparities in Maryland's criminal legal system are among the most glaring in the nation. Black Marylanders constitute 30% of the state's population, yet account for 51% of arrests<sup>1</sup>, 59% of the jail population<sup>2</sup>, and an alarming 71% of the prison population.<sup>3</sup> They also represent 71% of people on parole<sup>4</sup> and 53% of those on probation.<sup>5</sup>

Traffic stops are one of the most common contact points between civilians and law enforcement, significantly contributing to existing disparities. In Maryland, Black people are nearly twice as likely to be arrested compared to White people.<sup>6</sup> In 2022, Black Marylanders represented only 30% of the state's population but accounted for over half of all arrests.<sup>7</sup> The racial disparity is also evident in traffic enforcement; data from 2023 shows that police stopped Black drivers at rates 10% higher than those for White drivers.<sup>8</sup> Despite legislative reforms, increased oversight, and enhanced data collection requirements aimed at reducing racial profiling, the practice persists, causing significant harm to Black communities and undermining public trust in law enforcement.

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<sup>1</sup> FBI [CDE/UCR](#) Data

<sup>2</sup> Ann Carson, Prisoners in 2022, Bureau of Justice Statistics, November 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Ann Carson, Prisoners in 2022, Bureau of Justice Statistics, November 2023

<sup>4</sup> [DPSCS - DPP Annual Data Dashboard \(maryland.gov\)](#)

<sup>5</sup> [DPSCS - DPP Annual Data Dashboard \(maryland.gov\)](#)

<sup>6</sup> Maryland Statistical Analysis Center. "Maryland Crime Rates." Accessed January 23, 2025. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ac702edf5391486b9a3e07a4ed1e4dfe>.

<sup>7</sup> Maryland Statistical Analysis Center. "Maryland Crime Rates." Accessed January 23, 2025. <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/ac702edf5391486b9a3e07a4ed1e4dfe>.

<sup>8</sup> Maryland Governor's Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, [Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard](#), 2023.

## Traffic Stops and Escalation to Use of Force

Maryland has witnessed a noticeable increase in non-safety-related traffic stops in recent years.<sup>9</sup> Since 2016, the number of stops related to equipment malfunctions and registration issues has surged by 13%.<sup>10</sup> These non-safety stops account for 44% of all traffic interventions within the state.<sup>11</sup> In sharp contrast, stops related to moving violations, including speeding or running red lights, constitute a mere 11.85% of total traffic stops.<sup>12</sup> In addition, reckless driving accounts for only 1.17% of all traffic stops made by officers.<sup>13</sup>

Research demonstrates that non-safety-related traffic stops often lead to unnecessary escalation and use of force, disproportionately affecting Black drivers. A National study found that Black drivers are 2.9 times more likely to experience use-of-force incidents during traffic stops for non-safety-related infractions compared to White drivers.<sup>14</sup> Data from Maryland highlights this significant disparity: Black people account for 43% of all traffic stops and are more likely to be searched or arrested during these encounters than White drivers.<sup>15</sup>

In Maryland, the excessive policing of Black communities intensifies this issue, fostering mistrust between these communities and law enforcement. A 2024 study by the University of Maryland found that despite recent reforms, some Black residents continue to perceive the Baltimore Police Department as ineffective and racially biased, contributing to ongoing mistrust between these communities and law enforcement.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>9</sup> Vera Institute of Justice. Low-Level Traffic Stops Too Often Turn Deadly: Some Places Are Trying to Change That. Accessed January 20, 2025. <https://www.vera.org/news/low-level-traffic-stops-too-often-turn-deadly-some-places-are-trying-to-change-that>

<sup>10</sup> Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard,” Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, accessed August 13, 2024. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>.

<sup>11</sup> “Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard,” Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, accessed August 13, 2024. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>.

<sup>12</sup> “Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard,” Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, accessed August 13, 2024. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>.

<sup>13</sup> “Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard,” Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, accessed August 13, 2024. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>.

<sup>14</sup> Matthew A. Graham et al., *Racial Disparities in Use of Force at Traffic Stops* (Denver, CO: Center for Policing Equity, 2024), <https://policingequity.org/traffic-safety/83-data-brief-use-of-force-at-traffic-stops/file>.

<sup>15</sup> “Race-Based Traffic Stop Data Dashboard,” Governor’s Office of Crime Prevention and Policy, accessed August 13, 2024. <https://gocpp.maryland.gov/data-dashboards/traffic-stop-data-dashboard/>.

<sup>16</sup> Driscoll, Gina, and Rachael Grahame. “UMD Study: Some Black Residents Still Distrust Baltimore Police Department Even After Reforms.” Maryland Today, May 31, 2024. <https://spp.umd.edu/news/umd-study-some-black-residents-still-distrust-baltimore-police-department-even-after-reforms> and Abell Foundation. “Police-Community Relations in Baltimore.” <https://abell.org/publication/police-community-relations-in-baltimore>

## **Proven Solutions from Other Jurisdictions**

States and cities across the country have implemented reforms that reclassify non-safety-related traffic violations as secondary offenses, demonstrating that such changes reduce racial disparities without compromising public safety. Examples include:

- Philadelphia's Driving Equality Bill reclassified non-safety-related infractions as secondary offenses. This change resulted in a significant reduction in racially biased stops while still maintaining road safety.<sup>17</sup>
- Virginia's Traffic Reform Law has limited police authority to initiate stops for non-safety-related violations and has successfully reduced racial disparities in traffic enforcement by 19%.<sup>18</sup>
- Minnesota's Lights On! Program replaced citations for equipment-related violations with repair vouchers. This initiative has fostered positive community relations and addressed drivers' economic burdens.<sup>19</sup>

These programs illustrate Maryland's potential to enact evidence-based reforms that improve equity in traffic enforcement while maintaining public safety.

## **Conclusion**

Senate Bill 292 presents the Maryland General Assembly with an opportunity to address the racial inequities in traffic enforcement practices and advance MEJC's recommendation to end non-safety traffic stops. We urge the Committee to consider the above information as you assess Senate Bill 292 and this critical issue.

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**Submitted by: Maryland Equitable Justice Collaborative**

**Anthony Brown, Co-Chair  
Maryland Attorney General**

**Natasha Dartigue, Co-Chair  
Maryland Public Defender**

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<sup>17</sup> City of Philadelphia. Executive Order No. 2021-06: Police Enforcement of Motor Vehicle Violations. November 9, 2021. Accessed January 23, 2025. <https://www.phila.gov/media/20211109145453/executive-order-2021-06.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> WTKR News. "Virginia House Bill Would Reverse Law Limiting Minor Traffic Stops." Last modified January 23, 2025. Accessed January 23, 2025. <https://www.wtkr.com/news/politics/virginia-house-bill-would-reverse-law-limiting-minor-traffic-stops#:~:text=RICHMOND%2C%20Va.,for%20a%20minor%20traffic%20violation>.

<sup>19</sup> CBS News Minnesota. "Minnesota Legislature Considers Vouchers Instead of Tickets for Broken Car Lights." Last modified January 23, 2025. Accessed January 23, 2025. <https://www.cbsnews.com/minnesota/news/minnesota-legislature-vouchers-instead-of-tickets-broken-car-lights/>

# **Maryland State PolicePosition Paper for SB0292.pdf**

Uploaded by: Owen Traynor

Position: INFO





**State of Maryland**  
**Department of State Police**  
Government Affairs Unit  
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

**POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

**DATE:** January 28, 2025

**BILL NUMBER:** Senate Bill 292      **POSITION:** Letter of Information

**BILL TITLE:** Motor Vehicles – Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence

**REVIEW AND ANALYSIS**

This legislation prohibits a police officer from enforcing certain vehicle laws as a primary violation. The violations for which a police officer can no longer stop a motor vehicle are, unregistered motor vehicle, expired tags, displaying tags issued to another vehicle, driving on suspended, canceled, or revoked registration, dropping hazardous materials on the highway or littering, blocking bus lanes, equipment violations, noise violations, to name just a few.

Under current law, a police officer is required to have probable cause that a violation is occurring or has occurred before making a traffic stop of a motor vehicle. Probable cause violations include faulty equipment, moving violations, registration violations, as well as criminal violations such as any number of alerts related to missing persons, silver alerts, stolen tags or vehicles. Traffic stops include moving and nonmoving violations and equipment repair orders.

The Maryland State Police (MSP) has been directly involved in a number of traffic initiatives for the purpose of safer highways and neighborhoods. Our agency has partnered with the Randallstown NAACP at their request for greater visibility and enforcement as well as the Lt Governor's work zone safety committee. In 2024 the work zone safety enforcement initiative resulted in over 12,000 traffic stops. Of these stops, 53 warrants were served, 15 criminal arrests were made along with 5 CDS arrests. One firearm was seized. Since June, 2024 MSPs other highway safety initiatives have resulted in over 8,000 traffic stops. Of these stops, 33 arrests were made for open warrants, 4 criminal arrests, 7 CDS arrests and 1 firearm was seized.

Another of the MSP's ongoing traffic safety initiatives includes a partnership between state and local law enforcement to patrol the feeder routes into Baltimore City. The NAACP wanted to see a greater law enforcement presence on MD. Rt 140 from I-695 to the Baltimore City line. Since the start of the program in the fall of 2022, together, law enforcement partners have made over 3,000 traffic stops resulting in 24 open warrant arrests, 15 criminal arrests, and 7 firearms seized.

Senate Bill 292 creates a prohibition for a police officer to stop a motor vehicle for certain traffic offenses. This prohibition is punishable by administrative disciplinary action against the officer and includes termination. Many of the offenses specified in the legislation are serious traffic violations which directly impact the safety of other drivers and pedestrians. As demonstrated earlier, traffic stops do provide a measure of criminal enforcement results.

**State of Maryland**  
**Department of State Police**  
Government Affairs Section  
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

**POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION**

Motor vehicles are the main source for the importation of illegal guns, drugs, and fugitives to and from our neighborhoods. Many of the violations described in the legislation lead to the discovery of more serious crimes. Driving an unregistered vehicle or driving with tags belonging to another often lead to uninsured motor vehicles, or stolen cars. Additionally, unsafe vehicles, such as those without headlights, stop lights, or turn signals, make vehicles unsafe to operate and make our roadways more dangerous for the motoring public and pedestrians.

If a motor vehicle was driving on a roadway at night without any lights on, Senate Bill 292 would prohibit the officer from stopping the vehicle and possibly saving a life. Should the driver of this same vehicle be intoxicated, any evidence of the additional offenses would be inadmissible and the officer would be facing disciplinary action. Safe cars save lives.

The Maryland General Assembly has had to deal with a number of traffic related problems that impact the state: the increase in motor vehicles that are registered in surrounding states residing in Maryland, noise complaints from motorcycles, commercial vehicles and modified exhausts, uninsured motor vehicles, and overall traffic safety. Senate Bill 292 prevents law enforcement from enforcing many of these violations as a primary violation.

The Maryland Department of State Police hopes you find this information useful as you consider Senate Bill 292.