

signed_Letter of Support from Hatzalah.pdf

Uploaded by: Avrohom Green

Position: FAV



Hatzalah of Baltimore Inc.

www.hatzalahbaltimore.org

2930 Taney Road * Baltimore, Maryland 21209 * 410-585-0054* office@hatzalahbaltimore.org

24 February 2025

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To Whom It May Concern,

Hatzalah of Baltimore proudly supports SB1030 and HB1520, which protect our use of emergency lights. Our mission is to deliver rapid, life-saving care throughout Baltimore City and surrounding County areas, supplementing 911 services when every second counts.

In 2020, increased call volumes and local congestion pushed our average response time to 5 minutes—an unacceptable delay in emergencies. By obtaining MVA approval to equip select senior officers' vehicles with emergency lights for high-priority calls, we reduced our response times to approximately 2.5–3 minutes. Over the past four years, we have consistently demonstrated safe and responsible use of this capability, while continuing to pursue additional measures to further reduce response times.

Our volunteer-based model—leveraging fully equipped volunteers and coordinated efforts with municipal services—has been refined since the 1960s and successfully adopted by Hatzalah organizations worldwide. Since our inception in 2005, this approach has enabled us to ensure that every individual in need receives immediate care, regardless of background.

We believe the proposed legislation is crucial to safeguarding our operational integrity and advancing our life-saving mission. By supporting the continued, well-regulated use of emergency lights, this bill ensures that Hatzalah of Baltimore remains responsive, effective, and innovative in delivering emergency medical care.

Thank you for your commitment to enhancing public safety.

Sincerely,

Eli Goldstein
Elimelech Goldstein
President

K Danziger
Kalman Danziger
Treasurer

S Luxenburg
Shmuel Luxenburg
Secretary

S Hirsch
Rabbi Shimon Hirsch
Director

M Pinck
Menachem Pinck
Director

Y Seidemann
Rabbi Yonason Seidemann
Director

SB 1030 - Senator Attar's Testimony (002).pdf

Uploaded by: Dalya Attar

Position: FAV

DALYA ATTAR
Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Education, Energy, and the
Environment Committee
Education Subcommittee



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 122
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3697
800-492-7122 Ext. 3697
Dalya.Attar@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 1030 – Vehicle Laws – Lighting on
Privately Owned Vehicles**

March 11, 2025

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 1030 - *Vehicle Laws – Lighting on Privately Owned Vehicles*, which seeks to improve the safety and effectiveness of volunteer emergency medical services (EMS) officers in Baltimore City and Baltimore County. This legislation clarifies existing law to ensure that nonprofit volunteer EMS organizations can continue to safely and efficiently use emergency lighting on their personal vehicles while responding to emergencies.

Clarifying Existing Authorization

Senate Bill 1030 is intended to address a gap in the current law by providing a clear, legal framework for volunteer EMS organizations to equip certain officers with emergency lights on their personal vehicles. One example of an organization this bill benefits is Hatzalah of Baltimore, a volunteer rescue squad that has been operating since 2005. Hatzalah, like many volunteer EMS organizations, works directly with and is regularly called upon by the Baltimore Fire Department. Since its inception, Hatzalah has treated an average of 1,800 patients per year, helping tens of thousands and saving countless lives.

In 2020, Hatzalah approached the Maryland Vehicle Administration (MVA) to address delays in their ability to respond to emergencies due to traffic. They sought to secure proper authorization to use emergency lights on their vehicles, and the MVA granted this authorization. Since then, Hatzalah has been using emergency lights for high-priority calls, significantly improving response times for emergencies where every second counts.

However, after recent discussions with the MVA, they advised that the use of emergency lights on volunteer EMS vehicles was not entirely clear in the law. Therefore, while the MVA is currently allowing these vehicles to continue using the lights without issue, they have requested legislation eliminate any ambiguity. This bill will ensure that Hatzalah, as well as other volunteer EMS organizations, can continue operating without concern for potential legal uncertainty.

What Senate Bill 1030 Does

Senate Bill 1030 clarifies the existing law by specifically authorizing nonprofit volunteer EMS organizations in Baltimore City and Baltimore County to equip up to five of their highest-ranking officers' privately owned vehicles with emergency lights. These lights, which may be red or red-and-white, can only be used while the officers are en route to or at the scene of an emergency.

Urging Your Support for Senate Bill 1030

This bill is not creating new rights or privileges—it is merely clarifying and formalizing an existing practice to ensure that nonprofit volunteer EMS organizations can continue to serve their communities without interruption. By passing Senate Bill 1030, we are removing any legal ambiguity and providing a simple solution that will improve the efficiency of volunteer EMS responses, enhance public safety, and provide clarity for both volunteer organizations and law enforcement.

I respectfully ask for your support in passing this important bill. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dalya", with a long, sweeping horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Senator Dalya Attar

signed_Bill 1030 Testimony. Hillel Traub.pdf

Uploaded by: Hillel Traub

Position: FAV

LAW OFFICE OF HILLEL TRAUB, P.A.

1777 REISTERSTOWN ROAD • SUITE 22-W • BALTIMORE, MD 21208
TELEPHONE (410) 580-1100 • FAX (410) 580-1101
www.TraubLaw.com / Traublaw@Gmail.com

March 11, 2025

Testimony in Support of SB 1030 – Baltimore County and Baltimore City - Vehicle Laws - Lighting on Privately Owned Vehicles

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

My name is Hillel Traub, and I am counsel for Hatzalah of Baltimore, a nonprofit volunteer emergency medical services organization servicing the citizens of Northwest Baltimore and surrounding areas of Baltimore County.

Thank you for your consideration of Senate Bill 1030 – Baltimore County and Baltimore City - Vehicle Laws - Lighting on Privately Owned Vehicles, which provides additional clarification to existing law and specifies the authorization of not more than five of the highest ranking officers from certain nonprofit volunteer emergency medical services (EMS) organizations located in Baltimore County and Baltimore City to have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red and white lights.

At present, Maryland law allows not more than five of the highest-ranking officers from volunteer emergency services to have their privately owned vehicles equipped with red or red and white lights but does not specifically call out volunteer emergency medical service organizations.

In 2020 the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) authorized the five senior officers of a local volunteer emergency medical service operating in Baltimore City and surrounding areas of Baltimore County since 2008 to equip their vehicles with emergency lighting under the existing law. However, after a review in 2024, wanting to ensure it was operating within acceptable authority, the MVA requested the law be amended to clarify and specifically include this authorization. Senate Bill 1030 seeks to merely add the specific instance requested by the MVA with limitations to ensure that only five senior members of the organization can be authorized.

Critical Reasons for This Change

1. **Shortage of Resources/ Increase of EMS Calls:** With budgetary constraints throughout the state affecting all services, there are fewer and fewer EMS resources available to serve the citizens. Additionally, over the last decade the number of citizens in need of EMS has skyrocketed; causing the already strained resources to be stretched thin. Volunteer services like the ones affected by Senate Bill 1030 continue to be desperately needed to fill the gaps wherever possible.

LAW OFFICE OF HILLEL TRAUB, P.A.

1777 REISTERSTOWN ROAD • SUITE 22-W • BALTIMORE, MD 21208
TELEPHONE (410) 580-1100 • FAX (410) 580-1101
www.TraubLaw.com / Traublaw@Gmail.com

- 2. Increase in Traffic:** The area covered by these types of organizations is relatively small, and they were previously successfully able to operate without any kind of emergency lighting in their vehicles. However, with the significant increase in congestion in 2020, the use of emergency lighting for high priority calls became a true necessity.

Urging Your Support for Senate Bill 1030

Senate Bill 1030 is important to ensure the citizens of Baltimore City and surrounding areas of Baltimore County continue to receive rapid EMS care when seconds truly matter. I ask for your thoughtful consideration and your vote in favor of this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

H Traub

Hillel Traub, Esquire

SB1030 - MVA - LOI - Baltimore County and Baltimor

Uploaded by: Matt Mickler

Position: INFO

March 11, 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 1030 – Baltimore County and Baltimore City - Vehicle Laws - Lighting on Privately Owned Vehicles

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 1030 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

SB 1030 would allow up to five individuals who are the highest-ranking officers for certain nonprofit volunteer emergency medical services organizations located in Baltimore County and Baltimore City to equip their privately owned vehicles with red or red and white lights or signal devices for use in driving to or while at the scene of an emergency. The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) would be required to process authorization requests for approval of each vehicle granted authorization.

The MVA has met with a local volunteer rescue squad on this issue previously and has advised that it cannot authorize emergency light use for personal officers of the organization without changing current law. MDOT respects the value of community-based emergency medical services and their network of volunteers but seeks clarification regarding the authorization created by SB 1030. While the bill authorizes “no more than five of the highest-ranking officers” in each nonprofit volunteer emergency medical organization located in Baltimore County or Baltimore City to utilize the lights in question on their personal vehicles, MVA’s understanding is that some of these organizations are comprised of multiple sub-organizations, each with their own officers. If each sub-organization is authorized to request lighting for five of its highest-ranking officers, there is the potential for a cumulative total of more than five permitted personal vehicles per organization.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 1030.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer
Administrator
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
410-787-7830

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