

ANTIQUÉ AUTOMOBILE CLUB OF AMERICA

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Maryland House of Delegates
Environmental & Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

Good afternoon, Chair Smith and Members of the Committee,
My name is Kyle Blake. I am a resident of Cumberland, Maryland, and I appear before you today as a National Director of the Antique Automobile Club of America (AACA) to ask for your support on **House Bill 773**.

To understand why this bill matters, it is important to understand who the AACA is. We are the world's oldest and largest organization dedicated to automotive preservation and restoration. We are 45,000 members strong, including **2,000 active members in 8 regions right here in Maryland**.

For 91 years, we have been the standard-bearers for this hobby. And since 1973, we have operated on a specific core standard: **a vehicle becomes eligible as historic when it reaches 25 years of age**.

This "25-year rule" is the global gold standard set by AACA. House Bill 773 simply asks Maryland to adopt that same standard.

Right now, Maryland law cuts off historic vehicles at the year 1999. However, at our national meets last year, we displayed thousands of pristine vehicles from the year 2000 and later- with approximately 25 being from the year 2000 alone. These vehicles are restored to the way in which they were delivered from the dealer to the original owner- no modifications and with all the factory safety specifications of the time. Under current regulations, those cars are celebrated globally as historic, yet they are unrecognized here at home.

But this isn't just about dates on a calendar; it is about **people**. The antique car hobby is driven by nostalgia. People collect the cars they coveted in their childhood. By freezing the definition of "historic" at 1999, we are inadvertently closing the door on a new generation of enthusiasts. We are telling young collectors that the cars *they* grew up with don't count.

To keep this hobby alive and growing, we must welcome the vehicles of the new millennium and the younger members who love them.

House Bill 773 aligns Maryland with industry standards and ensures our hobby has a future. On behalf of the AACA and our 2,000 Maryland members, I urge a favorable report.

Thank you for your time, and the AACA wishes you happy motoring.



Kyle Blake,
National Director/ Vice President of Youth Development & National Awards
Antique Automobile Club of America