

MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION

*Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel
-a 501(c)3 Organization*



Legislative Committee

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Delegate Marc Korman
Chairman, Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Delegate Michele Guyton
Vice Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Reference: HB 777

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the committee:

I am writing to express strong support for Maryland House Bill 777, Motor Vehicles – Required Equipment – Rear Occupant Alert Systems (Hot Cars Act).

HB 777 represents a practical lifesaving measure to prevent heatstroke deaths and injuries resulting from children being unintentionally left in vehicles. These tragedies are entirely preventable and continue to occur nationwide, often affecting attentive and caring families. Requiring rear occupant alert systems in newly manufactured or assembled vehicles establishes an important layer of engineered protection that supports human factors and reduces reliance on memory alone.

From a community risk reduction and public safety perspective, this legislation aligns with evidence-based prevention principles by:

- **Addressing a known, recurring risk** through built-in vehicle safety technology
- **Creating a consistent statewide standard** for life safety equipment
- **Reducing preventable child fatalities and serious injuries**
- **Supporting first responders and public safety agencies** in their mission to protect vulnerable populations

Rear occupant alert systems are a low-cost, high-impact intervention that complements ongoing public education campaigns such as “Look Before You Lock.” By integrating this safeguard directly into vehicle design, Maryland will take a proactive step toward eliminating hot car tragedies rather than relying solely on behavioral change.

Data indicates Maryland has experienced 16 preventable fatalities due to children being left unattended in hot vehicles, reinforcing the need for targeted community risk reduction and public education efforts. Passage of HB 777 will position Maryland as a national leader in child passenger safety and community risk reduction. This legislation reflects a thoughtful, preventive approach that prioritizes the protection of children and supports the broader public safety mission.

Thank you for your consideration and for your continued commitment to the safety of Maryland’s families.

The Maryland State Firefighters Association respectfully urges a favorable report on HB 777. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Robert Phillips

MSFA Legislative Committee Chair