



SafeRoadsMD

PLEASE SUPPORT HB 474
“Clear Before You Drive Act”

MARYLAND COALITION FOR ROADWAY SAFETY, INC.
URGES MD HOUSE ENT COMMITTEE SUPPORT FOR HB 474

February 17, 2026

TO:

Honorable Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Honorable Delegate Michele Guyton, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Maryland General Assembly
250 & 251 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

FROM:

John Seng, Chair
SafeRoadsMD - Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.
(202) 468-7682, JSeng@SafeRoadsMD.org
SafeRoadsMD.org

Subj: Support of HB 474 “Clear Before You Drive Act”

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton and Members of the Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee,

On behalf of SafeRoadsMD, I respectfully request your favorable report on House Bill 474, the “Clear Before You Drive Act.”

This common-sense legislation addresses a significant and preventable roadway safety hazard: snow and ice left on vehicles that can dislodge while driving and injure other motorists, law enforcement, and emergency responders. We saw this danger play out in Maryland this winter.

- In late January, a large sheet of ice flew off a vehicle on Interstate 97 in Anne Arundel County, shattering the windshield of a sheriff’s cruiser and injuring a deputy who required medical treatment before being released from the hospital. At least two other Maryland motorists were also hurt when chunks of ice struck their windshields while driving this same week. ([WBAL](#))
- In Havre de Grace, a substantial piece of ice crashed through a windshield on I-95 northbound, sending two people to the hospital. ([WBFF](#))

These are not isolated anecdotes, but part of multiple similar incidents reported across Maryland following recent snow and ice events. They illustrate how snow and ice that may seem harmless can become dangerous “ice missiles” at highway speeds — causing injury, property damage, and potential secondary collisions.

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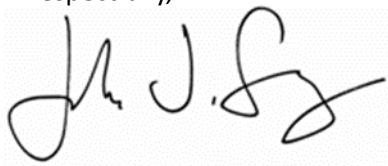
House Bill 474 would help prevent these incidents by requiring drivers to remove accumulated snow and ice from all exposed vehicle surfaces, including roofs, windshields, windows, hoods, and tops of trailers, before operating or towing a vehicle if the accumulation poses a threat. The bill wisely allows enforcement as a secondary action, minimizing enforcement burden while encouraging compliance. It pairs modest graduated fines with stronger penalties only when failure to clear snow or ice contributes to a crash involving significant property damage, serious injury, or death.

This approach reinforces personal responsibility and aligns Maryland with other states that have recognized the public safety benefit of similar laws.

Clearing snow and ice from a vehicle requires just a few minutes of effort. But as these recent Maryland incidents show, the consequences of not doing so can be severe and costly. House Bill 474 would help protect Marylanders from harm that is both foreseeable and preventable.

For these reasons, SafeRoadsMD strongly urges a favorable report on House Bill 474. Thank you for your leadership and for your consideration of this important safety measure.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John J. Seng". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "J" and "S".

John J. Seng
Chair
Maryland Coalition for Roadway Safety, Inc.

cc: SafeRoadsMD Board