

February 19, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 646 – Driver Licensing – Self-Reporting of Medical Conditions

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 646 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

HB 646 would require the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to primarily base its decision on a medical provider report or physician referral for whether to issue, refuse, or cancel a driver's license for individuals who self-report a diagnosis of certain medical conditions. It further requires the MVA to offer a non-graduated license system learner's permit (non-GLS LP) in certain situations when an individual has previously had a driver's license cancelled or suspended due to a medical diagnosis, which has improved such that they may have the capacity to drive safely again.

Studies show that there is no evidence-based information to help primary care physicians make decisions regarding medical fitness to drive¹. Instead, best practices rely on opinion-based determinations unique to each individual. A National Highway Traffic Safety Administration study found that every state has some form of Medical Advisory Board (MAB) and provides recommendations for the best medical review practices for determining an individual's fitness to drive². Additional findings and recommendations include:

- The MAB should review individual cases for fitness-to-drive determinations and develop medical criteria and guidelines for licensing.
- Medical/functional guidelines should be used with consistency in treating drivers but should not replace individual case review by MAB physicians for more complicated cases.
- Rules written for medical review of drivers should be incorporated in the Code of State Regulations, not in statutes, to adapt as medical data evolves.
- Drivers should be required to self-report medical conditions for initial and renewal licensure. Physicians who perform medical evaluations on drivers of private vehicles (upon request of a DMV medical review unit) should be certified to determine eligibility.

The MVA is authorized under Maryland law to appoint an MAB to advise the MVA on physical and mental conditions that can impact the ability of individuals to safely operate a motor vehicle in the State. The MAB has identified specific conditions that medical research has demonstrated can have such

¹ Molnar FJ, Byszewski AM, Marshall SC, Man-Son-Hing M. In-office evaluation of medical fitness to drive: practical approaches for assessing older people. *Can Fam Physician*. 2005 Mar;51(3):372-9. PMID: 15794022; PMCID: PMC1472959.

² [dot_1971_DS1.pdf](#)

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potential and asks applicants and existing license holders during eligible transactions if they have been diagnosed with any of these conditions.

Currently, when a customer self-reports or is referred for medical review, the customer is sent a medical packet that includes a physician or health care provider report to be completed by the treating physician. The packet is then reviewed by a Nurse Case Reviewer (NCR), using guidelines established by the MAB, to assess the indicators unique to the customer and condition(s) risks associated with vehicle operation. Depending on the condition, diagnosis, and applicable treatment, the referral may be sent to the MAB for additional review. Ultimately, the recommendation may include no action, periodic monitoring, or suspension. Most medical conditions that are reported do not warrant immediate suspension. In cases where suspension is recommended, the customer is given an option to request an administrative hearing to contest the suspension. Additionally, when further evidence is requested beyond a medical provider report or physician referral, it is typically to a license holder's benefit as the NCR and/or MAB are seeking other information which could be utilized to ensure driving privileges are maintained by the licensee. Putting more narrow limits on review scope would thus be to the detriment of license holders rather than their benefit.

The MVA has taken steps over the past few years to review and update its procedures and streamline medical case review, among the most recent changes being the way customers disclose their specific reportable medical condition(s). Starting in January 2026, customers completing online transactions can report their specific medical condition, rather than denoting only "condition," allowing the MVA to immediately request specific condition information. This revision expedites MVA's review, rather than waiting for the customer's first submission and then requesting specific information related to those conditions disclosed in the first submission.

Finally, the MVA currently issues a non-GLS LP to customers in certain circumstances, as this type of permit means customers can practice driving with an experienced driver before a driving test. The MVA is currently undergoing standardization in ensuring one is offered to customers in circumstances where it is warranted and training staff to ensure this step is taken. The instance defined in HB 646 would be unlikely to result in any increase in annual non-GLS LP issuance as such cases where a medical condition resulted in a loss of driving privileges for at least one year, would be more serious conditions that likely require specialized medical reviews.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of House Bill 646.

Respectfully submitted,

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