

February 5, 2026

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

RE: Letter of Concern – House Bill 23 – Motor Vehicle Administration - Identification Cards - Issuance to Minors

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 23 but offers the following concerns for the Committee’s consideration.

HB 23 alters certain requirements related to issuance of a Maryland Identification (ID) Card to minors at least 15 years of age or older by the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA). These alterations include not requiring a parent or legal guardian’s signature or presence for certain minors to obtain identification cards, changes to documents the MVA must accept for certain provisions related to REAL ID, and allowances for issuing a non-compliant ID card in certain circumstances.

MVA requires a parent or guardian to provide a signature in order to issue an identification card. The MVA currently has a process in place for minors to obtain a Maryland ID card which incorporates acceptable documents unique to this age group that the United States Department of Homeland Security (DHS) has approved as meeting REAL ID requirements. The MVA will provide a REAL ID to any individuals – including minors covered by this bill – if the individual can meet the document requirements. The MVA works closely with customers to bring them into compliance with REAL ID requirements even when they do not have the most common documents.

The MVA is proud of its REAL ID compliance rate of 99% and is in the process of having its REAL ID program re-certified by DHS. Changes to any licensing documents for REAL IDs require advance permission from DHS.

Additionally, HB 23 would require the MVA to issue a non-compliant product in an instance where a minor who is at least 15 years old cannot meet the document requirements set out by the federal REAL ID Act. However, Maryland law presently requires customers who are issued a non-compliant ID card to provide proof from the Maryland Comptroller’s Office that they have been a taxpaying resident of Maryland for at least two years. The requirement to provide two years of tax returns filed with the Comptroller may prove difficult for the minors covered under HB 23, who are less likely to have the required tax records.

MVA is currently in conversation with the bill sponsor to address the underlying intent of the bill. We may be able to address some of these concerns by policy or alternative means. We are open to collaborating to ensure a satisfactory resolution for all parties.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of House Bill 23.

Respectfully submitted,

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