

February 12, 2026

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

RE: Letter of Concern – HB 381 – State Highway Administration - Urban Core and Urban Center Traffic Control Devices - No Turn on Red

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 381 but offers the following concerns for the Committee’s consideration.

As drafted, HB 381 requires the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to install traffic control devices prohibiting right hand turns on steady red signals at each signalized intersection on a State highway in an urban core or urban center. SHA may choose not to install a traffic control device at a specific intersection if SHA determines that the installation of the traffic control device would significantly impair public safety. The work mandated by this legislation must be performed by July 1, 2029.

The SHA supports the strategic use of No Turn on Red (NTOR) restrictions as a tool to enhance pedestrian and bicyclist safety on our roadways. NTOR is recommended within SHA’s *Context Driven Guide* as an appropriate treatment in areas with higher levels of pedestrian activity and motor vehicle interaction, reducing conflicts between vulnerable road users and turning vehicles.

In alignment with MDOT’s Vision Zero objectives and the intent of HB 381, the SHA is committed to advancing transportation safety through safety initiatives, like the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) projects and other Complete Streets focused programs. SHA is implementing data-driven safety improvements across Maryland and is backed by more than \$400 million in funding in the six-year Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP). Furthermore, there are more than a dozen PSAP corridors across Maryland in various stages of project development, planning, and design, and one project is in active construction.

As written, HB 381 does not provide SHA with an appropriation or revenue mechanism for the required NTOR improvements. Based on a comprehensive review of the 133 intersections subject to the bill, the cost of installing NTOR restrictions across the State is estimated to be more than \$3.1 million. SHA does not have funds available for these projects. Therefore, SHA would need to reallocate funding within the existing capital program resulting in the delay or deferral of other critical safety projects programmed in the CTP.

Additionally, HB 381 does not consider circumstances where installation of the required traffic control devices requires significant modification or replacement to existing infrastructure. This work would

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need to be completed by July 1, 2029, less than 3 years after the effective date of the bill. This timeline is not feasible with the resources currently available to SHA and will require reprioritization of other critical safety and system preservation projects.

Additionally, the bill provides an allowance to exclude the traffic control device installation, if the Administration determines that the installation would significantly impair public safety. The SHA performs traffic and engineering studies on all intersections to determine the optimal safety improvements for that location. Through this evaluation, SHA can identify the most effective countermeasures using sound data and engineering judgement with the support and consideration of the Context Driven Guidelines. While NTOR restrictions are a proven safety countermeasure, the bill does not contemplate that each intersection should be properly studied to determine if a countermeasure may impair public safety. Furthermore, resources to evaluate and analyze intersections are not included in the bill. Therefore, the bill presumes that the need for evaluation of potential impairments to public safety would be limited. SHA maintains that we should first conduct the appropriate evaluation and analysis of the intersection to determine potential public safety implications before presuming these risks are not present.

Finally, under current state law, Transportation Article § 2-103.1 defines the processes for counties to receive transportation investments as part of the statewide transportation funding prioritization process. This bill mandates SHA to fund projects exclusively in urban cores and urban centers, circumventing the CTP requirements in state law. SHA does not have funding to advance the additional projects required by HB 381. Therefore, SHA would need to reallocate programmed funds from other critical projects and safety improvements.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information in its deliberation of House Bill 381.

Respectfully submitted,

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