

**Bianca\_Floyd\_SB0068\_D Torch Foundation FAV**

Uploaded by: Bianca Floyd

Position: FAV

## Testimony in Support of SB0068: The D TORCH Road Safety Act

FROM: Bianca P. Floyd

DATE: Sunday, March 29, 2026

Good morning, Chair and members of the Committee. My name is Bianca Floyd. I am submitting my written testimony before you not only as a Maryland resident but also thinking about my work in public history, the paths we have traveled and the history of the people who lived and worked along those roads.

I am also the daughter of Elois Hamilton, a community leader who, in the 1960s and 70s, fought to rename George Palmer Highway in Prince George's County to Martin Luther King Jr. Highway - believing that the names on our roads should reflect the dignity of the people who travel them. She was also the founding President of the Prince George's County Chapter of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

Donnell Floyd Jr. was her grandson.

My mother's generation fought for the well being of the people who lived along the streets we travel. I know the path. I research that history, even in retirement. Today, my family - including my sister-in-law Jennifer E. Floyd, and my brother, Donnell Floyd Sr. - fight for the safety of our roads.

We are here because of my nephew, Donnell Floyd Jr., a young leader and founder of the Young Gunz Bike Club, whose life was tragically cut short.

Through the D TORCH Foundation, we are seeking to ensure that no other family has to process the pain of a life ended too soon if solutions towards prevention exist. In my research, I am pleased to see that the state has several efforts in this direction.

Senate Bill SB0068 only asks the Motor Vehicle Administration to "draw from a pool of at least five questions related to motorcycle safety awareness" on a driver's license exam. Looking at research online, I learned that in the United States, motorcycle riders are only a small percentage of those on the roads. In urban, or heavily populated areas, the importance of "safety" is all the more imperative. In one of the sources I found, it noted that in this country, motorcycle accidents "account for roughly **15%** of all traffic fatalities despite being only 3% of vehicles."

History is not just the past that we record; it is also how we improve the quality of our lives for the future.

In the 1980s, that meant changing a name. In 2026, it means changing our driver education to include motorcycle safety awareness. The D TORCH Road Safety Act ensures that every driver in Maryland is equipped with the knowledge to see, respect, and share the road with riders like Donnell."

As I noted in my previous support letter, on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2026, we will be celebrating the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of the United States of America. No matter how we arrived here or how we began here, our history is a journey that constantly moves forward. I urge you to support SB0068, so that the phrase "safe travels" meets this moment and that of future generations.

As a Star Trek fan, I like what Captain Jean-Luc Picard would say at a time of decision making:

“Make It So.”

Sincerely,

Bianca P. Floyd  
Proud citizen of the State of Maryland

**DJ\_Prez\_Black\_SB0068\_House\_Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: daniel hairston

Position: FAV

## **Written Testimony in Support of SB0068, The D TORCH Road Safety Act**

**DJ Prez Black**  
**President, Shepherds MC**

**Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:**

My name is DJ Prez Black, and I submit this testimony in support of Senate Bill SB0068, the D TORCH Road Safety Act, as President of Shepherds MC and as an active participant in Maryland's motorcycle community.

I personally knew Donnell G. Floyd Jr., known to many of us as TORCH. His loss was deeply felt by riders across our community. I have also known other riders who lost their lives in motorcycle crashes, and each loss reminds us how important awareness and shared responsibility are on our roads.

Motorcyclists ride knowing the risks, but we also depend on drivers to understand how to safely share the road with us. Too often, drivers are not exposed to enough information about motorcycle visibility, space, and reaction time differences.

SB0068 makes motorcycle safety awareness part of Maryland's Motor Vehicle Administration knowledge exam, ensuring drivers learn these principles before receiving a license.

From the perspective of those of us who ride regularly, increased driver awareness can make a real difference in preventing crashes and protecting lives.

I respectfully ask the committee to support Senate Bill SB0068.

Respectfully submitted,

**DJ Prez Black**  
**President, Shepherds MC**

**Mayor Darlene Taylor - SB0068 - City of Crisfield**

Uploaded by: Darlene Taylor

Position: FAV

Darlene Taylor, Mayor  
City Council:  
Eric Banks, Council V.P.  
Ivan Lankford  
Casey Goldsborough  
LaVerne Johnson  
Hitesh Patel

**City of Crisfield**  
City Hall  
319 W. Main Street  
Crisfield, Maryland 21817

P.O. Box 270  
410-968-1333  
Fax 410-968-2167  
staff@crisfieldcityhall.com

1/25/26

Written Testimony in Support of Senate Bill SB0068  
D TORCH Road Safety Act

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Darlene Taylor, and I am honored to serve as Mayor of Crisfield, Maryland. I respectfully submit this written testimony in support of Senate Bill SB0068, the D TORCH Road Safety Act. As Mayor of a waterfront community in Somerset County, I see firsthand how roadway safety impacts residents, visitors, and local businesses. Crisfield proudly welcomes motorcyclists at our annual events during Labor Day, and our annual ELKS Day events that attract riders from across Maryland and surrounding states. These events are an important part of our local economy and community culture, bringing increased tourism and activity to our city, but with that opportunity also comes responsibility. Motorcyclists are among the most vulnerable users of our roadways. While municipalities like Crisfield work diligently to manage traffic and public safety during large events, long-term motorcycle safety depends on statewide driver education and awareness, not just local enforcement. Senate Bill SB0068 provides a practical, proactive solution by requiring motorcycle safety awareness questions to be included in Maryland's Motor Vehicle Examination. This ensures that new drivers across the state understand how to safely share the road with motorcycles, recognizing visibility challenges, maintaining safe following distances, understanding lane positioning, and preventing avoidable crashes.

For communities that welcome motorcycle tourism, this legislation supports both public safety and economic vitality. When riders feel safer traveling Maryland's roads, they are more likely to visit, return, and support local businesses. Preventable motorcycle crashes, on the other hand, place emotional and financial strain on families, emergency responders, and municipal resources, impacts that small communities feel deeply. The loss of riders such as Donnell G. Floyd Jr. (TORCH) reminds us that these incidents are not merely statistics. They represent lives lost unnecessarily and families forever changed. Education and awareness are key to preventing such tragedies, and Senate Bill SB0068 takes an important step in that direction.

I respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill SB0068 and to support legislation that strengthens roadway safety for riders, drivers, and communities throughout Maryland. Thank you for this opportunity. Respectfully submitted, Darlene Taylor Mayor, City of Crisfield

Sincerely,



Darlene Taylor  
Mayor, City of Crisfield

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY.pdf**

Uploaded by: Donnell Floyd Sr

Position: FAV

# Written Testimony in Support of SB0068 – The D TORCH Road Safety Act

**Donnell G. Floyd Sr.**

**Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:**

My name is Donnell G. Floyd Sr. I submit this written testimony in support of Senate Bill 0068 (SB0068) as a father who lost his son in a preventable motorcycle crash.

On September 10, 2024, my life was forever changed when my son, Donnell G. Floyd Jr., was killed while riding his motorcycle. My son—known to many as Torch—was a responsible rider who, like thousands of others across Maryland, depended on drivers to see him, respect him, and share the road safely. That did not happen.

There are no words that can fully express the pain of losing a child. It is a grief that does not fade, a silence that never leaves, and a future that was taken far too soon. Every day, my family and I live with the reality that my son will never come home again.

What makes this loss even more devastating is knowing that his death was preventable.

Motorcyclists do not have the same physical protections as drivers in passenger vehicles. They rely heavily on the awareness, attentiveness, and responsibility of others. Too often, drivers are distracted, unaware, or uneducated about how to safely share the road with motorcycles.

SB0068 directly addresses this gap in driver education by requiring motorcycle safety awareness to be included in Maryland's motor vehicle examinations before drivers are licensed. This ensures motorists understand visibility, safe following distances, rider vulnerability, and the potentially fatal consequences of inattention.

Had this type of education and awareness been emphasized and required, my son's life may have been spared.

This bill is not about punishment or blame. It is about prevention, responsibility, and saving lives. Motorcycles are not objects on the road—they are people. Sons. Daughters. Fathers. Mothers.

I cannot bring my son back. But I can use my voice to speak for him and for the many riders who no longer can.

I respectfully urge this committee to pass SB0068. Doing so will honor the lives already lost and help prevent future families from experiencing the pain my family now lives with every day.

Respectfully submitted,

**Donnell G. Floyd Sr.**

# **Jennifer\_Floyd\_SB0068\_Testimony\_Packet\_With Data C**

Uploaded by: Jennifer Floyd

Position: FAV

## **Oral and Written Testimony in Support of SB0068, The D TORCH Road Safety Act**

Jennifer Floyd  
Founder and CEO, D TORCH Foundation

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit my testimony today in strong support of Senate Bill SB0068, the D TORCH Road Safety Act.

My name is Jennifer Floyd. I am the Founder and CEO of the D TORCH Foundation, a nonprofit organization I created after losing my son, Donnell G. Floyd Jr., known as TORCH in the motorcycle community, in a motorcycle crash on September 10, 2024.

Motorcyclists represent a small percentage of vehicles on our roads, yet they account for a disproportionate number of serious injuries and fatalities. In Maryland alone, an average of 77 motorcycle riders and passengers are killed each year, and nearly 1,000 motorcyclists are injured annually. Nationally, motorcyclists are more than 20 times more likely to be killed in a crash than occupants of passenger vehicles because they are far more vulnerable on the roadway.

One of the most dangerous places for motorcyclists is intersections. Many crashes occur not because drivers are reckless, but because they are not properly educated on how to safely share the road with motorcycles. My son did not make it home from one of those intersections.

Senate Bill SB0068 addresses this gap directly. It ensures that every new driver in Maryland is educated and tested through the Motor Vehicle Administration knowledge exam on motorcycle safety awareness topics such as visibility, proper lane positioning, safe following distances, and other essential safety principles.

This bill is about education, awareness, and prevention. It promotes a culture of shared responsibility and respect on Maryland roadways.

Following my testimony, I have included official Maryland Department of Transportation crash data showing motorcycle injury and fatal crashes by county from 2019 through 2023 to illustrate the statewide impact of this issue and the urgent need for SB0068.

This legislation has already passed the full Senate unanimously with strong bipartisan support. Families and communities across Maryland are hopeful that the House will join the Senate in supporting this important step toward safer roadways.

This bill is about more than statistics. It is about our loved ones, mine, yours, and our communities across Maryland. My son did not make it home. SB0068 can help prevent another family from receiving that call. One life lost is one life too many. I respectfully ask for a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Jennifer Floyd  
Founder and CEO  
D TORCH Foundation

**Maryland Department of Transportation  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
Maryland Highway Safety Office**

**Motorcycle-Involved Injury and Fatal Crashes  
State of Maryland | 2019–2023**

This packet presents official Maryland crash data documenting motorcycle-involved injury and fatal crashes by county from 2019 through 2023. The information is provided to support roadway safety awareness and data-informed policy discussions aimed at reducing motorcycle injuries and fatalities across the State of Maryland.

**Prepared by:**  
D TORCH Foundation  
Mrs. Jennifer Floyd

**Maryland Department of Transportation  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
Maryland Highway Safety Office**

**Motorcycle-Involved Injury Crashes by County (2019–2023)**

County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	AVG	%
Allegany	11	13	20	13	17	15	1.6
Anne Arundel	100	92	104	98	110	101	10.8
Baltimore County	128	128	136	141	124	131	14.0
Calvert	15	16	15	17	16	16	1.7
Caroline	5	5	2	5	7	5	0.5
Carroll	33	23	23	34	21	27	2.9
Cecil	29	36	26	36	36	33	3.5
Charles	38	36	33	39	27	35	3.7
Dorchester	7	6	8	6	10	7	0.8
Frederick	54	55	54	66	55	57	6.1
Garrett	7	8	6	7	9	7	0.8
Harford	36	43	50	58	47	47	5.0
Howard	33	25	39	39	34	34	3.6
Kent	2	2	1	5	4	3	0.3
Montgomery	94	67	69	87	83	80	8.5
Prince George's	107	118	130	93	109	111	11.9

County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	AVG	%
Queen Anne's	8	12	11	9	13	11	1.1
St. Mary's	25	20	37	32	38	30	3.2
Somerset	3	2	3	4	2	3	0.3
Talbot	3	2	6	12	6	6	0.6
Washington	36	44	37	31	35	37	3.9
Wicomico	30	25	34	17	20	25	2.7
Worcester	30	26	25	23	29	27	2.8
Baltimore City	63	103	95	94	95	90	9.6
TOTAL	897	907	964	966	947	936	100.0

D TORCH Foundation | Mrs. Jennifer Floyd

**Maryland Department of Transportation  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
Maryland Highway Safety Office**

**Motorcycle-Involved Fatal Crashes by County (2019–2023)**

County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	AVG	%
Allegany	0	1	0	1	1	1	0.8
Anne Arundel	9	11	4	7	6	7	9.6
Baltimore County	12	12	11	11	11	11	14.7
Calvert	1	2	2	3	2	2	2.6
Caroline	0	0	0	1	1	0	0.5
Carroll	0	4	2	1	0	1	1.8
Cecil	4	2	3	6	1	3	4.1
Charles	3	3	3	5	4	4	4.7
Dorchester	1	1	0	0	0	0	0.5
Frederick	6	7	6	4	7	6	7.8
Garrett	1	3	1	2	1	2	2.1
Harford	5	2	2	2	6	3	4.4
Howard	1	4	4	2	6	3	4.4
Kent	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.3
Montgomery	5	5	10	3	6	6	7.5

County	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	AVG	%
Prince George's	11	13	13	9	15	12	15.8
Queen Anne's	0	1	1	1	1	1	1.0
St. Mary's	3	2	3	1	3	2	3.1
Somerset	0	0	2	0	0	0	0.5
Talbot	0	0	0	1	0	0	0.3
Washington	1	3	1	3	2	2	2.6
Wicomico	5	1	2	1	1	2	2.6
Worcester	2	1	3	2	0	2	2.1
Baltimore City	4	3	4	8	6	5	6.5
TOTAL	74	81	77	75	80	77	100.0

D TORCH Foundation | Mrs. Jennifer Floyd

**Testimony in support SB68, 2026.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Sheridan

Position: FAV



**Jolene Ivey**  
At-Large Council Member

*"Serving the People of Prince George's County!"*

March 31, 2026

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am Prince George's County Council Member At-Large Jolene Ivey, and I write in support of Senate Bill 68, the D. Torch Road Safety Act, and ask that this Committee vote favorably.

I support SB 68 because it takes a simple, practical step to improve road safety in Maryland. Motorcycles are smaller and less visible than other vehicles, and many crashes occur because drivers fail to notice them or do not understand how to share the road safely. Requiring the Motor Vehicle Administration to include motorcycle-safety awareness questions on the driver's license exam will help ensure that every new driver learns basic rules for interacting safely with motorcycles, including visibility, following distance, and safe lane use.

This bill uses the existing driver's licensing exam process to improve public safety without creating new bureaucracy or significant costs. By making motorcycle awareness part of the knowledge expected of every driver, Maryland can help reduce preventable crashes and encourage safer habits on the road.

The Senate has already recognized the value of this common-sense measure by passing SB 68 with strong bipartisan support. The House should also support the bill so that this straightforward safety improvement can take effect. Increasing driver awareness is one of the most effective ways to prevent collisions, and this legislation is a reasonable step toward making Maryland's roads safer for motorcyclists and all road users.

The Act is named in honor of Donnell "Torch" Floyd Jr., a reminder that behind every traffic statistic is a real person and a grieving community and family.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support SB 68.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Jolene Ivey  
Member At-Large  
Prince George's County Council

**SB68\_\_E&T\_Testimony-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ken Eaton

Position: FAV



# ABATE OF MARYLAND, INC.

*Dedicated to Freedom of the Road & Responsible Motorcycle Legislation Since 1974*

To: The Honorable Marc Korman, Chairman and Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

From: Ken Eaton, Executive Director, ABATE of Maryland, Inc.

Date: March 27, 2026

Re: **SB68** - Driver's Licenses - Driver Skills Examination - Motorcycle Safety Awareness

Position: **FAVORABLE: SUPPORT**

As Executive Director of ABATE of Maryland, Inc., I proudly represent more than 100,000 registered on-road motorcyclists statewide. Since 1974 our organization has been unwavering in its mission: “Dedicated to Freedom of the Road & Responsible Motorcycle Legislation.”

For more than fifty years our members have not only defended rider rights but promoted personal responsibility. We believe training and education are the most effective tools to reduce crashes and injuries — and those efforts must be backed by sensible public policy.

ABATE played a key role in launching Maryland’s motorcycle safety program decades ago. We remain active advocates for riders, continually promoting safety and awareness through training and education. Preventing accidents is central to achieving our mission.

SB 68 strengthens Maryland’s safety framework and offers practical support for our shared goal of safer roads. We commend Senator Charles for his leadership in introducing this important bill, and ABATE of Maryland stands fully behind it.

We respectfully urge the committee to acknowledge the safety advantages of **SB 68** and issue a **FAVORABLE** report.

**ABATE of Maryland, Inc.**

Kenneth B. Eaton, Executive Director  
Tel: 410-263-9185 (office)

# **Testimony SB0068 El Amin.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mahasin El Amin

Position: FAV

**SB0068 Driver's Licenses - Driver Skills Examination - Motorcycle Safety Awareness Environment and Transportation – March 31, 2026**

**Sponsor: Senator Nick Charles**

**Position: Favorable**

**Testimony of Mahasin El Amin, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Prince George's County**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mahasin El Amin, I am the Clerk of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County. I respectfully submit my written testimony in strong support of SB 0068, which seeks to incorporate motorcycle safety awareness into Maryland's motor vehicle education and examination process.

On April 21, 2025, I received a phone call from my mother that no child ever wants to receive. She told me that my father had been hit while riding his motorcycle on his way to pick up a prescription around 2:30 on a Tuesday. My father was 76 years old and operating his 2010 Harley-Davidson touring motorcycle. She made a left-hand turn into my father. It was later determined that she was operating a vehicle on a suspended license.

My father's entire left side was basically broken, requiring multiple surgeries, a six-week stay in a subacute rehab facility, and extensive physical therapy. I'm extremely grateful that my father survived the collision. However, nearly year later, he still suffers from the trauma of his injuries, and he will never have the same quality of life or range of motion prior to being hit.

Survival alone should not be the standard when discussing roadway safety. Like many families affected by motorcycle crashes, I was left asking critical questions, could this crash have been prevented through greater driver awareness and education?

SB0068 directly addresses my concern. By requiring motorcycle safety awareness to be included in Maryland's motor vehicle examinations, this legislation ensures that drivers are educated, before they receive a license, about sharing the road with motorcyclists, maintaining safe distances, recognizing rider vulnerability, and understanding the potentially fatal consequences of distraction or inattention.

Motorcyclists do not have the same physical protection as occupants of passenger vehicles. SB0068 acknowledges this reality and places responsibility where it belongs: on educating drivers to be more attentive, less distracted, and more protective of all roadway users. Safer roads are not just a rider issue; they are a public safety issue. This bill establishes a preventative approach by addressing unsafe driving behaviors before crashes occur, rather than responding after families are already harmed.

I strongly support SB0068 and urge this committee to recognize its life-saving potential. By passing this bill, you can reduce preventable injuries, protect Maryland families, and create safer roadways for everyone who uses them.

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration. Thank you Senator Charles for sponsoring SB0068.

**Marion\_Odom\_Jr\_SB0068\_Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Marion Odom Jr

Position: FAV

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0068**  
**Marion Odom Jr.**  
**Support**

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Marion Odom Jr., and I am writing in support of Senate Bill 0068.

I lost my nephew, Donnell G. Floyd Jr., in a motorcycle crash. He did not make it home. His loss has deeply affected our entire family, and we continue to carry that pain every day.

Senate Bill 0068 is important because it would add motorcycle safety awareness questions to Maryland's driver knowledge exam. Increasing awareness among drivers about how to safely share the road with motorcycles is a simple but meaningful step that can help prevent future tragedies.

This bill will help encourage greater respect between drivers and riders and make our highways and byways safer for everyone traveling on Maryland roads.

I respectfully ask the committee to vote favorably on SB0068, in memory of my nephew and in support of safer roads for all Maryland families.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Marion Odom Jr.

**Mary\_Odom\_SB0068\_Testimony\_Glenarden\_MD.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mary Odom

Position: FAV

## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SB0068**

**Mary Odom**

**Glenarden, Maryland**

**Support**

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Mary Odom, and I am writing in support of Senate Bill 0068.

I believe this bill should be passed because it will educate drivers and help save lives in the future. Motorcycle safety is very important to me personally. I have lost two nephews in motorcycle crashes. In both cases, the crashes were caused by drivers of cars or trucks.

Our roads are becoming more crowded, and there are more riders than ever before. It is important that drivers understand how to safely share the road with motorcycles. Senate Bill 0068 would help increase that awareness by adding motorcycle safety questions to the Maryland driver's license exam.

Updating the MVA knowledge test to include motorcycle safety is a practical step that will help both drivers and riders better understand each other and make our roads safer for everyone.

I respectfully ask the committee to give SB0068 a favorable report so that increased awareness can help prevent future tragedies for other families like mine.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,  
Mary Odom  
Glenarden, Maryland

**Tracy\_Richardson\_SB0068\_House\_Testimony(1).pdf**

Uploaded by: Tracy Richardson

Position: FAV

# **Written Testimony in Support of SB0068, The D TORCH Road Safety Act**

**Tracy Richardson**  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

**Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:**

My name is Tracy Richardson, and I am submitting this testimony in support of Senate Bill SB0068, the D TORCH Road Safety Act, as the aunt of Donnell G. Floyd Jr., known to many as TORCH.

I am writing this letter to provide a character testimonial for my nephew, Donnell Floyd Jr., whom I have known since the day he was born. I had the opportunity to watch him grow from a young boy into a teenager, then into a man and a father. He was an outstanding man who cared deeply about his family and the people around him, and he made a positive impact on the community we live in.

On September 10, 2024, our family lost Donnell in a motorcycle crash. Losing him has been heartbreaking for all of us. What makes this loss even more difficult is knowing that crashes like the one that took his life are often preventable when drivers are better educated and more aware of how to safely share the road with motorcyclists.

I know my nephew would be proud of our family for supporting the D TORCH Road Safety Act, because it is important that all drivers understand their responsibility in helping riders make it back home safely to their families. This legislation promotes awareness, responsibility, and prevention, and it has the potential to protect countless lives across Maryland.

SB0068 is not just about motorcyclists, it is about safety for everyone who uses our roadways. When drivers are more informed, communities become safer, and families are better protected from preventable loss.

I respectfully ask the committee to support Senate Bill SB0068 so that fewer families experience the pain our family now carries every day.

Respectfully submitted,

**Tracy Richardson**  
Upper Marlboro, Maryland

# **SB0068 - MVA - Driver Skills Examination - Motorcy**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

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March 31, 2026

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

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 68 – Driver's Licenses – Driver Skills Examination  
– Motorcycle Safety Awareness***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 68 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

SB 68 requires the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to update its knowledge test for first-time driver applicants to include at least one question related to motorcycle safety awareness. It also requires MVA to add five additional motorcycle safety questions to the overall bank of questions the knowledge test draws from. MVA has committed to implementing these changes to the driver's knowledge test.

The MVA is committed to road safety for motorcyclists who are considered vulnerable road users, similar to pedestrians and bicyclists as they don't have the same protections motorists do in vehicles. The Maryland Highway Safety Office (MHSO) collaborates with partner to educate all drivers on how to safely share the road with motorcyclists. We strive to eliminate motorcycle crashes, increase motorcycle safety on the roads, and increase the number of licensed motorcyclists.

The MVA requires applicants to take and pass the knowledge test with at least 88% (22) of the 25 questions answered correctly with a time limit of 20 minutes (time can be extended based on individual circumstances). A test bank of 138 questions are used across different subjects. The testing system pulls these questions at random from within the specified content areas, dividing the 25 questions into 18 different domains of knowledge. Test takers must demonstrate their knowledge of these fields that include areas such as signage (4 questions), speeding (2), distracted driving (1), and sharing the road with other vehicles (1). The format and content of the knowledge test is based on the best practices and guidelines outlined by the American Association of Motor Vehicle Administrators (AAMVA). Presently, the MVA has three questions regarding motorcycle safety that are within this pool of content area and is in discussion with the bill sponsor about expanding this subject matter.

Additionally, the MVA partners with the State Department of Education to create a standardized curriculum for driver's education schools in the State and provides the 10 units in its curriculum

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Page Two

for the public to view via its website. The MVA further oversees compliance with curriculum standards taught in the approximately 150 driver's education schools across the state.

Currently, Unit Seven (7) of the driver's education curriculum addresses motorcycle safety. This content includes visibility of motorcycles and the need to fully check a blind spot before changing lanes, avoiding sharing a lane with a motorcycle, leaving safe following distance behind a motorcycle and the reasons why this is even more important compared to a typical vehicle, and ensuring to properly yield to motorcycles when turning and to pass with care and plenty of space to avoid a crash.

The MVA strives to ensure its driver's education curriculum provides the most comprehensive and up-to-date standards in driver education. The curriculum is periodically reviewed and updated as needed to ensure it meets current standards, especially when it comes to the safety of road users, including motorcyclists. Testing standards are also maintained and updated periodically to ensure ongoing best practices and national standards established by AAMVA are utilized by the MVA. The MVA is currently already in the process of updating its knowledge test question pool to incorporate the requested changes made in SB 68. Ensuring the MVA can continue to quickly adopt modern trends and institute changes in the field of testing driver's license applicants through flexibility in the statute requirements are an important component in the goal of reaching zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries on state roadways by 2030.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 68.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer  
Administrator  
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration  
410-787-7830

Matthew Mickler  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090