

X SB 698-Accumulations of Snow and Ice-Removal Fro

Uploaded by: Andrea Mansfield

Position: FAV



Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Marc Korman, and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Vince Flook, President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland
Will Cain, 1st Vice President, Towing & Recovery Professionals of Maryland

DATE: March 31, 2026

RE: **SB 698 - Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) **SUPPORT** SB 698, which prohibits a person from operating or towing a vehicle without removing accumulated snow and ice from exposed vehicle surfaces. It also provides for penalties if a violation causes a property damage, serious bodily injury, or death.

Towing and recovery operators are among the first to arrive on the scene of crashes caused by snow and ice dislodging from vehicles. We see firsthand the devastating results of accumulated snow and ice flying from a vehicle's roof, hood, trailer, or cab and striking another motorist. The results include shattered windshields, multivehicle collisions, serious bodily injury, and even, in the worst instances, fatalities.

SB 698 is a common-sense safety bill. A driver already has the responsibility to ensure their vehicles and loads are secure. Just as towing and recovery professionals must properly secure every vehicle to a tow apparatus before transporting it, every driver should ensure that snow or ice does not detach and endanger others.

For these reasons, the Towing Recovery Professionals of Maryland (TRPM) **SUPPORT** SB 698 and urge a favorable committee report.

SB0698 - LOS - SHA - Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accu

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: FAV

March 31, 2026

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

RE: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 698 – Vehicle Laws – Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice – Removal from Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following letter of support for the Committee’s consideration of Senate Bill 698.

SB 698 prohibits a person from operating or towing a vehicle without removing accumulated snow and ice that poses a threat to persons or property from exposed surfaces and prohibits a person from committing a violation that may contribute to a crash resulting in property damage or the injury or death of another person.

The State Highway Administration (SHA) supports the Clear Before You Drive Act as it addresses a critical public safety need on Maryland’s roadways. As we have seen in recent weeks, flying ice shattered the windshield of a sheriff deputy’s cruiser on I-97 in Anne Arundel County, and two people in Harford County were hospitalized when ice smashed through their windshield on I-95.

Additionally, snow debris from moving vehicle surfaces limits visibility for other drivers, contributing to crashes. Uncleared vehicles also significantly contribute to secondary accumulation on roadways, making it more challenging for winter maintenance crews to achieve bare pavement and resulting in dangerous localized icy areas on roadways.

These incidents pose serious threats to highway users and all Marylanders. Currently, driving with snow-covered vehicle surfaces is not explicitly illegal unless it obstructs the driver’s visibility. The Motor Vehicle Administration’s Maryland Driver’s Manual currently contains information on driving in snowy and icy conditions. Drivers are taught to ensure not only their windshield and headlights are clear, but to clear the entire vehicle of snow and ice before they begin vehicle operation on roadways. SB 698 codifies this guidance in law, improves safety for highway users, and holds motorists accountable for snow and ice accumulation on their vehicles.

The Honorable Marc Korman
Page Two

SB 698 is a common-sense measure that encourages personal responsibility and prevents avoidable roadway tragedies. For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberations and issue Senate Bill 698 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

April Moeller
Director
Office of Government Affairs
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-210-5780

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

AAA Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 698 - snow and ice

Uploaded by: Ragina Ali

Position: FAV



**AAA Mid-Atlantic's Testimony in SUPPORT of SB 698
Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice –
Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces
(Clear Before You Drive Act)
Sponsor: Senator McCray**

- AAA Mid-Atlantic **supports SB 698 the “Clear Before You Drive Act.”**
- While most drivers clear their windshield and back window of snow and ice, for their own visibility, all too often, they don't clear the roof, hood and or trunk of their vehicles.
- SB 698 strives to change this dangerous behavior, by making it illegal to drive without “*making reasonable efforts to remove from exposed vehicle surfaces accumulated snow and ice.*”
- The bill holds drivers accountable whose failure to remove snow and ice contributes to a crash causing death, serious bodily injury or property damage.
- At highway speeds, even a small sheet of ice can become a dangerous projectile, shattering windshields, causing drivers to lose control, and triggering chain-reaction crashes.
- With the snow and ice storms we saw in Maryland earlier this year, there were at least two incidents that were reported by news outlets, where drivers and/or their passengers were injured as a result of ice falling onto their vehicles.
- In Harford County, two people were injured when their car's windshield was shattered by ice, causing the driver to lose control on the Tydings Bridge on I-95.
- In Anne Arundel County, the windshield of a deputy's police car was smashed when ice struck it, requiring the deputy to be hospitalized with minor injuries.
- AAA believes that SB 698 will reduce serious crashes caused by snow or ice becoming dislodged from motor vehicles and will save lives, protecting drivers and all road users.
- As a matter of safety, courtesy, and common sense, AAA respectfully requests a favorable report for **SB 698**.

Contacts:

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443.465.5020*

*Marty Lostrom, GS Proctor & Associates
Associate
202.368.3859*

SB0968 - crossfiled bill - FAV - Education - Schoo

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB0968_Crossfiled_Bill_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
03/31/2026
Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON CROSS-FILED BILL SB#0968 – FAVORABLE

Education - School Bus - Fire Safety Standards

TO: Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of cross-filed bill SB#0968, Education - School Bus - Fire Safety Standards

I submitted testimony on the cross-filed bill version heard in your chamber. That was bill HB1610 which did not come out of committee. This is the crossover bill from the other chamber SB0968. I urge you to support this bill which passed the Senate with amendments by the vote of 41-0. Please pass this bill in your committee and in the House and return it to the Senate for final passage.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass cross-filed bill SB0968.

SB698 testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Robert Phillips

Position: FAV

MARYLAND STATE FIREFIGHTERS ASSOCIATION, INC.

-a 501(c)(3) organization

Representing the Volunteer Fire, Rescue and Emergency Medical Services Personnel



Legislative Committee

17 State circle

Annapolis, MD 21401

Chair: Chief Robert Phillips

Office: 410-974-2222

Cell: 443-205-5030

Email: rfcchief48@gmail.com

SB698: Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)

My name is Chief Robert Phillips, and I am the Legislative Committee Chair for the Maryland State Firefighters Association (MSFA)

I wish to present testimony in FAVOR of **Senate Bill 698: Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces (Clear Before You Drive Act)**

The MSFA is fully in favor of this bill. For the most part this is a no nonsense bill. As first responders our members have many times seen the effects of snow flying off of a vehicle and causing other drivers to have to make hasty decisions that may or may not work. This bill will assist with some of these situations being eliminated and making the roads a safer place to travel on. Our members have had equipment such as engines, trucks and ambulances damaged by ice and snow coming from other vehicles.

The MSFA asks that you return a **FAVORABLE** vote on **SB698**.

Thank you and I would be glad to answer any questions you might have.

Respectfully

Robert Phillips

SB 698_HB 474_ Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulat

Uploaded by: Trudy Tibbals

Position: FAV

SB 698/HB 474: Vehicle Laws - Dangerous Accumulations of Snow and Ice - Removal From Exposed Vehicle Surfaces: Please vote to **SUPPORT** this bill.

Dear Environment & Transportation Committee:

I am writing as a Maryland resident to express my support for **SB 698/HB 474**, which addresses the removal of dangerous accumulations of snow and ice from exposed vehicle surfaces.

This legislation is an important public safety measure. Snow and ice left on vehicles can easily become dislodged while driving, creating serious hazards for other motorists, including reduced visibility, vehicle damage, and the risk of accidents. Requiring drivers to take reasonable steps to clear their vehicles before traveling is a common-sense approach to preventing avoidable harm.

Many other states have adopted similar laws with positive results, helping to raise awareness and encourage safer driving practices during winter weather conditions. Maryland has the opportunity to do the same and better protect drivers, passengers, and pedestrians alike.

This bill promotes personal responsibility and roadway safety without placing an unreasonable burden on drivers. It is a practical step that can make a meaningful difference in reducing winter-related incidents.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to **support SB 698/HB 474**.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals