
April 1, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

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

Dear Chair Smith 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 driver's license holders or applicants who self-report a diagnosis of certain medical conditions, though offers the MVA the ability to request and utilize other documents or materials as it deems necessary. It further requires the MVA to offer a non-graduated license system learner's permit (non-GLS LP) in certain situations when a driver's license holder has previously had a driver's license cancelled or suspended due to a medical diagnosis which has improved such they may have the capacity to drive safely again. Finally, HB 646 would require the MVA to review its procedures and look for places to streamline review and implement electronic communications based on industry best practices. This review is to be reported on by December 1, 2026.

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 drive¹. 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 potential and asks applicants and existing license holders during eligible transactions if they have been diagnosed with any of these conditions.

Currently medical review case procedures begin with customer being 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 a 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. As providing flexibility for the NCR is typically to the customer's benefit, the

¹ [dot_1971_DS1.pdf](#)

MVA worked with the bill sponsor to ensure HB 646 does not limit the scope of what can be used in medical reviews.

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. HB 646 would represent a continuation of those ongoing efforts with a tailored focus to action it should be looking to take as it relates to procedural and communication changes.

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 drive 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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