
January 21, 2026

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

***RE: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 173 – Automated Enforcement – Reciprocity
Agreements and Arrangements***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports the passage of Senate Bill 173 as it critically enhances the efficacy of automated traffic enforcement (ATE) in the State of Maryland and will improve roadway safety for all road users.

SB 173 would provide new authority for the Motor Vehicle Administrator (MVA) to enter into reciprocal agreements with other jurisdictions to enforce unpaid speeding and red-light citations issued to vehicles with out-of-state registrations. The MVA would flag Maryland registered vehicles and prevent registration renewal for past due ATE citations in jurisdictions with a reciprocal agreement in place. Similarly, the MVA would notify its counterpart of any vehicles registered in that jurisdiction with past due ATE citations outstanding in Maryland for similar refusal of registration renewals.

Speeding and aggressive driving pose a significant safety risk. According to the 2026-2030 Strategic Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) between 2020 and 2024, crashes involving a speeding driver resulted in an average of 153 fatalities and 401 serious injuries per year—approximately 26% of all motor vehicle deaths during that period.

ATE citations reinforce safe driving behaviors by penalizing unsafe behavior. While ATE works to modify driver behavior and improve driving safety, the inability to enforce the financial penalty against out-of-state vehicles limits the effectiveness of ATE as a safety tool to modify driver behavior and improve driving safety. SB 173 would provide new authority to enforce ATE citations across state lines by flagging the vehicle registration in the home state would be new for Maryland. The State has had similar authority to enforce moving violations issued by eligible law enforcement and traffic enforcement officials since 1965 under the Non-Resident Violators Compact. SB 173 would thus modernize existing traffic enforcement reciprocity tools to reflect the full spectrum of methods used for highway safety enforcement in the 21st century. This new authority would also improve fairness and parity for Maryland and its residents by allowing the State to match the efforts of regional neighbors who already take civil actions

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against Maryland-registered vehicles. Further, it would increase regional consistency around consequences for driving unsafely.

MDOT's top priority is the safety of our transportation network. As a Vision Zero State, Maryland is committed to eliminating all vehicle-related deaths and serious injuries by 2030. While fatalities have been decreasing in recent years, the work will not stop until Maryland reaches zero fatalities. To achieve this, in May 2025, MDOT launched *Serious About Safety*—a Department-wide initiative to increase awareness about how to make our roadways safer and accelerate progress toward that goal. As part of this initiative, MDOT is advancing a package of safety bills aimed at improving safety outcomes. Senate Bill 173 is one such bill. In addition to supporting MDOT's *Serious About Safety* initiative, this bill advances recommendations from the 2026-2030 SHSP, the State's federally mandated action plan to address roadway deaths. The SHSP calls for strengthening enforcement initiatives focused on speeding and aggressive behavior through the use of ATE, with a particular charge to pursue legislation that enhance ATE authority.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant Senate Bill 173 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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