

Bill Number: SB 55

Scott D. Shellenberger, State's Attorney for Baltimore County

Opposed

WRITTEN TESTIMONY OF SCOTT D. SHELLENBERGER,
STATE'S ATTORNEY FOR BALTIMORE COUNTY,
IN OPPOSITION TO SENATE BILL 55
MOTOR VEHICLES – SECONDARY ENFORCEMENT AND ADMISSIBILITY OF
EVIDENCE

I write in opposition to Senate Bill 55 Motor Vehicles - Secondary Enforcement and Admissibility of Evidence. This Bill prevents law enforcement officers from doing their job and enforcing the law when it comes to traffic stops. It includes a long list of offenses that would prevent officers from conducting a stop for those reasons.

Some of those laws include offenses that would interfere with making sure drivers remain safe. A car is driving on a dark 2 lane road. Cars are coming in the other direction. One of the cars does not have a left front headlight. The officer sees this but can do nothing if SB 55 is passed. The inability for police to act puts all drivers at risk. There is virtually no other statute that provides more for safety than this one. Now it is not a basis to stop someone. Now an accident occurs and SB 55 is the reason.

What is more it is one of the 1st times I have seen a Statute that if violated by a police officer could be grounds for "administrative disciplinary action against the officer." I have never seen a Statute like that in Maryland.

The important thing to remember is that all police officers now have Body Cameras. Hit play and all parties can see everything that transpired including if something wrong took place. The body camera video does in fact document everything in real time. Why must it be done again in writing. The question to be asked is since when has the Constitution and the Bill of Rights not provided enough protections to our citizens. Since when do we make things illegal but officers are prevented from enforcing the laws. If these are not considered primary violations why are they against the law.

I urge an unfavorable report.