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April 3, 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 1614 – Maryland Transportation Authority – Lane Use Control Signal Monitoring Systems***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) take no position on House Bill 1614 and offer the following information for the Committee's consideration.

As amended during House consideration, HB 1614 authorizes the Maryland Transportation Authority to use lane-use control signal monitoring systems on MDTA highways to enforce motor vehicle offenses for entering or traveling in a lane over which a red lane-use control signal (Red X) is shown. Further, the bill requires the District Court to remit to the Maryland Transportation Authority any civil penalties collected by the Court resulting from a citation issued using a lane-use control signal monitoring system operated by the Authority.

When motorists do not obey the overhead lane-use control signals, it poses a risk to all who travel. Lane-use control signals apply to travel lanes before, on, and after the bridge, wherever lane-use control signals are present. A Red X signal indicates the lane is closed and motorists must not enter or travel in any lane over which a Red X signal is shown. A Yellow X signal indicates that the lane is about to be closed and motorists should move safely to a lane with a downward Green Arrow. A downward Green Arrow signal indicates that the lane is open for travel by motorists.

The Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) is aware of requests to take action on this issue, and MDTA is currently studying the feasibility of automated enforcement of lane-use control signals in order to determine the best course of action. MDTA anticipates that its study will conclude by the end of 2026. It is important to note that MDTA police will continue enforcement for failure to obey the lane-use control signs.

The MDTA worked with the sponsor to address a number of MDTA's concerns with HB 1614 as introduced. In addition to a number of technical corrections, the bill was amended to provide an authorization for MDTA to use lane-use control signal monitoring systems at all its facilities—the bill, as introduced, only applied to the Chesapeake Bay Bridge. Authorizing monitoring systems across all MDTA facilities would help to spread the costs of such a system and would enhance safety across those facilities. Additionally, the bill's requirement that an MDTA Police

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officer must swear to and affirm the occurrence of violations was amended to require an MDTA representative or contractor to swear to and affirm the violations. Further, the bill was amended to remove the uncodified section concerning the State Highway Administration (SHA) as the technology envisioned by the bill is outside the scope of SHA's current processes and contracts.

It is important to note that automated enforcement of lane-use control signal violations is uncharted territory. While speed and traffic signal automated enforcement systems are widely deployed, early indications show that no precedent exists for similar systems for automated enforcement of lane-use control signals within the U.S. Due to the unique nature of the system, implementation will take more than a year as we determine technical requirements and develop procurement.

The Maryland Department of Transportation and the Maryland Transportation Authority respectfully request that the committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1614.

Respectfully submitted,

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