MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Wes Moore
Governor

Aruna Miller
Lieutenant Governor

Kathryn Thomson
Acting Secretary

January 28, 2026

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

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 115 – Motor Vehicles – Automated Speed Enforcement – Improper Registration

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 115 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

SB 115 requires the Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) to enter into a long-term agreement with the Commonwealth of Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV) in order to routinely obtain updated information on vehicles owned by Maryland residents that are improperly registered in Virginia. Further, the MVA must share the information in a database available to State entities and local Maryland jurisdictions to support the automated enforcement provisions of the bill.

Having a vehicle registered in Virginia while a resident of Maryland is a direct violation of Transportation Article § 13-401 - § 13-403. The MVA currently works with the Virginia DMV to obtain information on Maryland owned vehicles registered in the Commonwealth. The MVA files a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request with the Virginia DMV, who then processes and shares the information with the MVA. The MVA reviews the data and compares it against MVA records to determine likely violators of Maryland's vehicle registration laws. However, any enforcement action to compel the owner to adhere to Maryland vehicle registration laws first requires physical verification that the vehicle owner is out of compliance.

The MVA is unable to place administrative flags on out-of-state vehicles. For Maryland-registered vehicles, a moving violation issued through automated traffic enforcement may be reported by an issuing jurisdiction to the MVA, which can flag the vehicle record. This flag prevents registration renewal and results in an additional $30 administrative flag fee owed to the MVA. The lack of similar authority for vehicles that are registered out-of-state can pose a risk of lower collection rates with growing liabilities against an owner. Further, the drivers are not effectively held accountable for their driving violations, and the lack of strong consequences fails to correct the negative driving behaviors which ultimately makes Maryland roads less safe. MDOT has submitted legislation for the 2026 session that would authorize the MVA Administrator to enter into interjurisdictional enforcement agreements for past-due speed and red light camera citations to address this.

Further, the MVA obtains this information from the Virginia DMV through partnership and established relationships. There is a possibility that the Virginia DMV will require local jurisdictions to pursue this data directly with their own FOIA requests. If such circumstances arise, the local jurisdiction may coordinate with the MVA for data processing and to identify potential violators.

The MVA will continue outreach to Maryland residents about State law with direct correspondence, public education campaigns, and working with the General Assembly to reduce the number of improperly registered vehicles in out-of-state jurisdictions. The MVA is committed to working with the sponsor and the committee to develop policy solutions that directly address this important matter and our shared goals in stemming the flow of improperly registered vehicles in the State.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 115.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine E. Nizer
Administrator
Maryland Motor Vehicle Administration
410-787-7830

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