



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair and
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 4, 2026

RE: **SB 349 - Vehicle Laws - Eluding Police - Penalties**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT SB 349**. This bill strengthens Maryland's vehicle laws by updating penalties for motorists who attempt to elude law enforcement officers and clarify that attempts to flee, whether on foot or in a vehicle, are prohibited when an officer has signaled for a stop. The bill also establishes enhanced penalties, including felony-level consequences, when such conduct results in the death of another person, thereby aligning legal consequences with the severity of the outcome.

Further, the police chiefs and sheriffs support this legislation because it enhances public safety by holding dangerous offenders accountable and deterring reckless behavior that places officers and the public at risk. Eluding a police officer is not a victimless act, and it frequently occurs at high speeds or in congested areas, endangering motorists, pedestrians, and law enforcement personnel. Clear, stronger statutory penalties send an unequivocal message that fleeing from police will not be tolerated and that those whose conduct results in catastrophic harm will face serious consequences.

By supporting this bill, law enforcement leaders want to reaffirm their commitment to reducing violent traffic offenses, protecting their officers in the line of duty, and promoting safer roads for all Maryland residents. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT SB 349** and urge a **FAVORABLE** committee report.