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Judicial Proceedings Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 4, 2026

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

RE: Senate Bill 936 – Vehicle Laws – Bus Obstruction Monitoring Systems and Bus Stop Zones

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am here to introduce SB936. This is my final bill of the year and, for that matter, the final bill of my legislative career in JPR. For this occasion, I am honored that our committee's Vice Chair, Senator Waldstreicher is co-sponsoring this bill with me.

This bill updates and strengthens Maryland's vehicle laws related to bus obstruction monitoring systems to include enforcement of bus stop zones.

Currently, based on a 2024 law, local jurisdictions and transit agencies have the option to operate bus-mounted automated systems to enforce parking restrictions in dedicated in bus lanes. That law also permits enforcement of bus stop illegal parking – but only in bus stops adjacent to a dedicated bus lane. In the real world, that means that very few bus stops across the state may be protected against illegal parking because there are very few dedicated bus lanes. It is hard to calculate, but it is likely that less than one percent of the state's bus stops are protected under the current law.

The existing statute renders the vast majority of the system open to parking in bus stops, leaving bus passengers, including many disabled and senior passengers, at risk of being unable to board or exit a bus safely.

This committee has heard testimony in previous sessions from disability advocates about the dangers of illegal parking in bus stops. When a bus is blocked by illegal parking and cannot pull up properly to a bus stop's sidewalk, the bus must board or accept riders in the street, where the gap between the bus and the street surface is significant, making it particularly difficult and dangerous for disabled and senior riders to get on and off the bus. Wheelchair users may choose to not board because of fear that the wheelchair ramp may tip backwards on a steeper boarding

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ramp. In DC, after WMATA implemented bus stop enforcement on routes, those routes saw a ten percent increase in wheelchair deployments from buses.

SB936 updates the law to replace references to a “bus lane monitoring system” with a “bus obstruction monitoring system” and establishes clear rules for enforcement in bus stop zones when transit vehicles are present.

Most importantly, SB936 prohibits stopping, standing, or parking a vehicle in a bus stop zone when a transit vehicle is present unless the driver has been authorized to stop, stand, or park there or unless the driver is actively loading or unloading passengers, in which case the vehicle’s hazard lights must be on. In this way, the bill provides clear expectations for motorists and improves safety for transit riders and pedestrians.

SB 936 modernizes Maryland’s traffic enforcement framework to reflect the realities of transit and to support safer, more efficient bus stop access. It strikes a balance between enforcement with fair notice and upholding the privacy of motorists.

I appreciate the Committee’s consideration of Senate Bill 936 and would be happy to answer any questions.