



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: House Judiciary

DATE: February 11, 2026

POSITION: Unfavorable

BILL: HB 466

The Maryland Municipal League respectfully opposes House Bill 466, which would establish a comparative negligence standard for certain civil actions arising from motor vehicle accidents involving “vulnerable individuals,” such as pedestrians and cyclists, as defined in law.

Under the bill, a vulnerable plaintiff’s recovery would not be barred by their own negligence unless that negligence was both a proximate cause of the injury and greater than the combined negligence of all defendants. In cases where the plaintiff is partially at fault, damages would instead be reduced in proportion to the plaintiff’s share of negligence. While the bill applies only to a subset of motor vehicle cases, it represents a departure from Maryland’s longstanding contributory negligence framework.

From a municipal perspective, even this limited shift raises meaningful liability and fiscal concerns. Municipalities are frequently named defendants in litigation involving pedestrian and cyclist incidents, particularly in cases alleging issues with roadway design, traffic control devices, crosswalks, sidewalks, or other public infrastructure. By lowering the threshold for recovery in these cases, the bill could result in an increase in the number of claims brought, as well as higher defense and settlement costs in matters that previously may not have proceeded under existing law.

Over time, these increased exposures could place upward pressure on municipal insurance premiums or self-insurance pool contributions, creating budgetary impacts for local governments. As a result, even a targeted modification to negligence standards in this area could have outsized implications for municipal risk management and liability planning.

For these reasons, the League respectfully requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 466.

For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

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MML represents 161 local governments and about 2 million Maryland residents.

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