

January 28, 2026

The Honorable J. Sandy Bartlett
Chair, House Judiciary
100 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 114 – Motor Vehicles - Accidents - Required Testing for Impaired Driving (Mateo's Law)

Dear Chair Bartlett and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 114 as an important safety initiative.

HB 114 requires any driver involved in a motor vehicle crash resulting in the death of, or a life-threatening injury to, another person to submit to certain breath and blood tests, as directed by a law enforcement officer.

From 2019 to 2023¹, over 920 people were killed in crashes involving an alcohol-impaired driver in Maryland. Deaths resulting from impaired driving crashes account for one-third of all roadway fatalities. Maryland strives to reduce that number and has set the goal of zero fatalities on our roadways by 2030.

Investigations often focus on “at-fault” drivers in a motor vehicle crashes, but the National Transportation Safety Board encourages states to “increase [the] collection, documentation, and reporting of blood alcohol concentrations (BAC) test results” for any driver in a fatal motor vehicle crash. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS) further requires a BAC test for every driver involved in a fatal crash. Untested drivers result in “unknown” BACs and require the use of statistical methodology. Depending on the characteristics of the untested driver, this may result in an over- or under-estimate of persons killed in an impaired driving crash.

HB 114 will bring Maryland into alignment with NHTSA recommendations and help fill missing gaps in vital traffic records that align with FARS requirements. Proper testing for impaired driving in fatal crashes will improve targeted safety campaigns and enforcement efforts to help reach the goal of zero fatalities on Maryland’s roadways.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant House Bill 114 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ The most recent five-year period for which data is available.