

To Whom It May Concern,

I write to express my strong support for Mateo's Law, a critical public safety measure that strengthens Maryland's impaired driving framework and addresses an important enforcement gap related to alcohol consumption prior to operating a motor vehicle.

In my professional capacity, I work for a nonprofit organization focused on mentoring, leadership development, and advocacy for young people—particularly young men—through structured programs centered on education, character building, and civic responsibility. Our work emphasizes accountability, informed decision-making, and the understanding that individual choices have far-reaching consequences for families and communities. From this perspective, Mateo's Law represents sound, preventative policy that aligns directly with the values we teach and the outcomes we strive to achieve.

The loss of life caused by impaired driving—particularly the loss of young lives—extends far beyond the immediate family. When a young person's life is cut short, schools lose students, communities lose future leaders, and neighborhoods lose stability and trust. The impact reverberates through peer groups, classrooms, faith institutions, and community organizations, creating long-term social and emotional consequences. In reality, every life lost to impaired driving weakens the broader community, underscoring the urgent need for policies that prioritize prevention over reaction.

Mateo's Law recognizes that impairment is not limited to the moment alcohol is consumed, but to its effects once an individual chooses to drive. By allowing for appropriate testing when there is reasonable cause, this legislation enhances the ability of law enforcement to protect the public while reinforcing the seriousness of impaired driving offenses. Closing this loophole strengthens existing DUI laws and ensures enforcement reflects the realities of alcohol impairment and roadway risk.

From a policy standpoint, Mateo's Law advances the essential goals of prevention, deterrence, and accountability. It improves public safety outcomes while affirming that the preservation of life—especially the lives of young people—must remain central to legislative decision-making.

I respectfully urge members of the General Assembly to take decisive action by supporting, advancing, and voting in favor of Mateo's Law to help prevent further loss of life and strengthen roadway safety across Maryland.

Thank you for your time, consideration, and commitment to the safety and well-being of Maryland's residents.

Respectfully,

Kenya Ayanna Harley