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Bryna Clark-Braverman
MADD Maryland Regional Executive Director
Testimony in Support of House Bill 873
House Judiciary Committee
March 4, 2026

Thank you, Madam Chairwoman and members of committee, for allowing me the opportunity to testify today in support of House Bill 873, also known as Jamari's Law, to hold impaired drivers who cause a fatality accountable. My name is Bryna Clark-Braverman and I am Regional Executive Director for the Maryland chapter of Mothers Against Drunk Driving.

MADD thanks Delegate Simmons for introducing this proposal. For anyone who has not been impacted by a violent crash caused by an impaired driver, it may be surprising to learn that every day in the United States, 34 people are killed and more than 1,000 people are injured in drunk driving crashes. That does not consider the horrific crashes caused by other drugs such as cannabis and opioids.

Since 2019, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), drunk driving deaths have increased 4% resulting in 173 preventable deaths in 2023 in Maryland.

Maryland is not alone in historic increases in drunk driving deaths. Throughout the nation, drunk driving deaths are at a historic high. Lawmakers must do more. I am urging you to support **HB873, also known as Jamari's Law**, which raises maximum penalties for illegally impaired drivers who cause a fatality from 10 years to 20 years and subsequent offenses from 15 years to 30 years. This law is about accountability and acknowledging the true gravity of taking a human life from a preventable action, driving drunk.

Currently, when a drunk driver causes a fatal crash, the offender can receive a maximum sentence of 10 years; however, because gross negligent manslaughter is not classified as a violent crime, no matter how egregious the circumstances, the offender can be released after serving less than a quarter of the sentence. In Jamari's case, an offender travelling at speeds 40 to 50 miles per hour above the speed limit with a blood alcohol content of .13, crashed into Jamari's car, resulting in his death. The offender, who was sentenced in 2023, was released in 2025. This is not justice for Jamari's family and all the other families that have been shattered by drunk and impaired driving, a 100% preventable crime.

Jamari's Law, HB873, is a victim-driven proposal that will allow for more justice. It does not create mandatory minimums of any sort, but Jamari's Law does allow for courts to seek a more appropriate sentence when illegally impaired drivers kill on Maryland roadways. Madam



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Chairwoman and members of committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today on behalf of Mothers Against Drunk Driving. We urge your support of Jamari's Law. Thank you.