



Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center, Inc.

Continuing the Missions of the Stephanie Roper Committee and Foundation, Inc.

☎ 877-VICTIM-1 (877-842-8461) ✉ mail@mdcrimevictims.org 🌐 mdcrimevictims.org

LETTER IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 114 (SB 110)

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Headquarters

1001 Prince George's Boulevard
Suite 750
Upper Marlboro, MD 20774
301-952-0063
877-842-8461 (toll free)
240-929-0526 (fax)

Baltimore

1 North Charles Street
Suite 700
Baltimore, MD 21201

Carroll, Howard, & Baltimore Counties

Oakland Manor
5430 Vantage Point Road
Columbia, MD 21044
240-335-4032

Eastern Shore

240-335-4012

Frederick & Montgomery Counties

240-335-4021

Southern Maryland

301-952-0063

Western Maryland

59 Prospect Square
Suite 6
Cumberland, MD 21502
240-335-4013

On behalf of the Maryland Crime Victims' Resource Center (MCVRC), I urge your support for House Bill 114 Mateo's Law. MCVRC provides legal services for crime victims throughout Maryland and is the largest nonprofit of its kind in the country. We write on behalf of our clients whose family members have been victims of drunk and impaired drivers.

House Bill 114 closes a loophole that has left grieving family members without evidence for decades; it will mandate that a driver who causes a death or life-threatening injury must be tested for substance use and will eliminate the irrelevant precondition that this only happen when law enforcement detains a driver. The evidence of whether the driver was impaired is critical evidence to determine what if any charges are appropriate. Without this law, critical evidence is not preserved.

Maryland's Highway Safety Office and the National Highway Traffic Safety Association (NHTSA) publish data concerning the traffic fatalities in Maryland and across the country. 621 traffic fatalities were counted in Maryland in 2023 including 577 separate crashes. 35% of those crashes involved a driver with alcohol in their system. (<https://www.fars.nhtsa.dot.gov/States/StatesCrashesAndAllVictims.aspx> <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>). The number of life-threatening injuries dwarfs these tragic numbers. ALL drivers need to be tested if they are in a collision causing a death or life-threatening injury; HB 114 will meet this need.

On behalf of Maryland victims, we ask you to pass House Bill 114. The pain of suffering a life-threatening injury or losing a loved one in a motor vehicle collision is devastating. To face the judicial system without this critical evidence is overwhelming and can be avoided by passing HB114. This is a small way Maryland can work towards promoting justice in our courtrooms and community.

Please vote in favor of House Bill 114. Your vote will support the many people in your jurisdictions that have been victimized by drunk and drugged drivers.

Sincerely,

Laura Corbett Wilt, Senior Supervising Attorney
240-335-4004; lwilt@mdcrimevictims.org

Joined by: Joanna Mupanduki, Deputy Director & Kurt Wolfgang, Executive Director