



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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TO: Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee Members

FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus (MLLC)

RE: HB973 Vehicle Laws - Violations Involving Pedestrians or Bicyclists - Penalties (Pedestrian Safety Act of 2020)

The MLLC supports HB973 Vehicle Laws - Violations Involving Pedestrians or Bicyclists - Penalties (Pedestrian Safety Act of 2020)

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation which improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a voice in the development of public policy affecting the Latino community and the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB973.

Maryland has seen a rise in pedestrian-involved traffic accidents in recent years. The Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) reported that in 2017, 92% of pedestrian-involved crashes in Maryland resulted in injury or death. According to a Governors Highway Safety Association's 2018 data report, our state was ranked fourteenth nationwide for pedestrian fatalities. The State must focus on ensuring commutes are safe, so that people are not risking their lives to go to school or work.

In addition, metropolitan areas in Baltimore City, Prince George's and Montgomery County, have higher rates of pedestrian-involved crashes. These are areas that have large populations of minorities and immigrants, who rely on walking and public transportation. This makes them more likely to be involved in a fatal pedestrian accident. A state that commits to increasing pedestrian safety puts the people they serve as a priority.

HB973 mandates an increase in the minimum fines for various traffic violations, such as failing to stop, or yield to pedestrians. It apportions the revenue from each fine to the Pedestrian Safety Fund, which the state would use to prioritize enhancing safety in locations near schools and bus stops. It is time for Maryland to commit itself to pedestrian safety, so that all communities are safe.

The MLLC supports this bill and urges a favorable report on HB973.