



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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HB 973

DATE: February 27, 2020

SPONSOR: Delegate Stewart, et al.

ASSIGNED TO: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (Sara.Morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT (Montgomery County Department of Transportation)

Vehicle Laws – Violations Involving Pedestrians or Bicyclists – Penalties (Pedestrian Safety Act of 2020)

House Bill 973 would establish a minimum fine of \$150 for traffic violations relating to a driver who fails to stop or yield to a pedestrian and bicycle traffic. Fines collected from this violation would go into the State Pedestrian Safety Fund which would have a prioritized use by the Maryland Department of Transportation to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety near schools and bus stops. Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) supports this legislation.

According to MCDOT, nearly 3,000 pedestrians are injured every year in Maryland. Of those injured, over 30 percent are under the age of 15. While Montgomery County has a lower traffic fatality rate than the U.S. and the State, last year the County reported 14 deaths on its roadways and nearly 600 incidents involving pedestrians and bicyclists. These statistics cannot become the norm on Maryland roadways.

The Vision Zero program adopted by Montgomery County several years ago has led to more focused and coordinated engineering, enforcement, and education strategies. The Pedestrian Safety Act of 2020 would align with the goals of Vision Zero. Toward that end, the Montgomery County Department of Transportation respectfully urges the Committee to adopt a favorable report on HB 973.