

**WRITTEN TESTIMONY of Edward J. Coyne,  
Deputy State's Attorney, for Carroll County  
IN SUPPORT OF SB 497/ HB 1334**

- 1) DRUGGED DRIVING is a major threat to Public Safety
  - Increase in drug use of fatally injured drivers. According to NHTSA, of those fatally injured drivers tested:
    - In 2007 25% of the fatally injured drivers had drugs in their system
    - In 2016, 42% of the drivers had drugs in their system
  - According to the 2018 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 12.6 million people aged 16 or older drove under the influence of illicit drugs.
  - In 2016, 19.7 percent of drivers who drove while under the influence tested positive for some type of opioid.
  - In Maryland, the average per year number of drug or alcohol collisions between 2014 to 2018 included:
    - 145 fatal crashes
    - 2124 injury crashes
    - Over 1/3 of such crashes involved death or injury
  
- 2) INCREASED USE OF OPIATES AND OTHER DRUGS
  - OVERDOSE Crisis: Between 2007 and 2018, fatal overdoses almost tripled (815 lives lost in 2007 to 2406 lives lost in 2018)
  - In 2018, 89% of the fatal overdoses involved opiates (2143 of 2406)
  
- 3) CURRENT LAW limits Public Safety and Justice:
  - Only Drug Recognition Experts ( DREs) can request consent for a blood sample from suspected drug impaired driver
  - DREs are a LIMITED RESOURCE:
    - Not enough DREs to respond to increasing amount of suspected drug impaired drivers

- In Carroll County we only have 3 DREs working for different departments
- In Carroll County over the last few years, over half of the suspected drugged driving cases had no DRE available to respond to evaluate the drivers or request a blood sample
- LOST EVIDENCE: both exculpatory and inculpatory
  - If DRE not available, Driver can't even be requested to consent to a blood to test for drugs or illegal controlled dangerous substances
  - Blood test can sometimes be EXCULPATORY, meaning no drugs were found in the blood and incident could be related to a medical condition

4) ARIDE: Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement Training

- Officers who get training already have completed DUI training in the academy and have experience in DUI enforcement on the road
- Additional training helps them identify impairment beyond alcohol

5) BILL PROVIDES JUSTICE and INCREASES PUBLIC SAFETY

- Obtain blood samples from more suspected drug impaired drivers
- Tool to help fight against Opiate Crisis
- Additional tool to help get the drugged drivers off the road and save lives

The Maryland State's Attorneys' Association and the Carroll County State's Attorney's Office are asking that this committee give SB 497 / HB 1334 a favorable report.