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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Senate Bill 497 Drugged Driving - Controlled Dangerous Substance Testing - Authorized Police Officers

Senate Bill 497 seeks to allow officers who have advanced training to detect drug impaired drivers, the ability to request blood from drivers when there are reasonable grounds to believe that the drivers are impaired by drugs. They would join Drug Recognition Experts (DRE) who have this authority now.

Currently if an officer suspects or confident that a suspect is under the influence, they are not permitted to test for drugs. Instead, they must contact a Drug Recognition Expert (DRE) to perform a 12 step examination. The DRE would then permit or deny the officer to make the request for the test. There are a limited number of DREs in the state particularly in smaller, less populated jurisdictions, and this requirement can often be time consuming and arduous, resulting in inability to test or charge a suspect.

A.R.I.D.E. (Advanced Roadside Impaired Driving Enforcement) is a 16 hour course, developed by the National Highway Safety Administration. This bill would allow officers who have graduated from the A.R.I.D.E. training to make the request, require, or direct a blood test for drugs.

I respectfully request a favorable on Senate Bill 497.