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HB 941

March 4, 2021

TO: Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee
FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations
RE: House Bill 941 - Baltimore City - Speed Limits – Establishment
POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 941.

HB 941 authorizes the City of Baltimore to set maximum speed limits for roads based on the roadway type and industry best practice without requiring a traffic engineering study.

The Baltimore City Department of Transportation (DOT) anticipates publishing the City's first ever Complete Streets Manual during calendar year 2021. Major components of the City's Complete Streets Manual include the formalization of design standards for promoting safer streets, slower speeds, and increased walkability as well as the establishment of street typologies for classifying city streets and standardizing roadway layout. If House Bill 941 were passed, Baltimore City DOT would use the City's Complete Streets Manual as a guide to set maximum speed limits on City corridors.

Within the past year, Baltimore City DOT has prioritized efforts to make Baltimore a Vision Zero city. Vision Zero is a world-wide traffic safety commitment to eliminate traffic fatalities and severe injuries among all road users. A major focus of Vision Zero is to plan, design, and post speed limits to the desired safe speed on any given street and not the speed that drivers are currently traveling. This is demonstrated by data that shows that when a pedestrian is struck by a car traveling at 20 miles per hour, they have a 95% chance of surviving – conversely, a pedestrian is struck at 40 miles per hour only has a 15-17% chance of surviving. From 2014 to 2018 there has been an average of 41 traffic-related fatalities and 8,868 traffic-related injuries in Baltimore City annually.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable** report on House Bill 941.