

NANCY J. KING
Legislative District 39
Montgomery County

MAJORITY LEADER



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 121
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
301-858-3686 • 410-841-3686
800-492-7122 Ext. 3686
Fax 301-858-3670 • 410-841-3670
Nancy.King@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR STATEMENT

Senate Bill 434 – Vehicle Laws – Failure to Pay Video Toll – Outstanding Fines

February 10, 2021

Mister Chairman and Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

In March of 2020, the MDTA board unanimously voted to reduce the civil penalty for toll violations from \$50 to \$25. This reduction took place on July 1, 2020. In their reasoning for reducing the fine, the MDTA indicated that the reduced penalty is more closely aligned with the costs that are incurred by the Department to process toll violations.

With the introduction of cashless tolling, and the recent increase of cashless tolling in the state, there is an increase in the number of video toll invoices being mailed to registered owners of cars that pass through the our state's tolls. Motorists have 45 days from the date of the invoice to pay the toll. If the toll is not paid in that timeframe, the invoice is increased now by \$25. Again, prior to July 1, 2020, that invoice was increased by \$50. So a toll that was only \$3, was then \$53.

In 2019 there were 923,583 civil penalties assessed and 510,523 of those penalties are still outstanding. The high penalty is clearly an impediment in collecting the fines and is a huge financial burden, especially for low income residents. Senate Bill 434 will reduce the outstanding civil penalty for toll violations that were assessed on or before July 1, 2021 from \$50 to \$25.

Many Maryland families are struggling financially. The pandemic has increased those numbers. Reducing these fines will help families to pay their debt or allow them to gradually pay off what is now an insurmountable debt.

I respectfully request a favorable report on Senate Bill 434.