

LAUREN ARIKAN
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Baltimore and Harford Counties

DEPUTY MINORITY WHIP

Judiciary Committee



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The Maryland House of Delegates
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

March 1, 2021

SUPPORT HB 926 – Criminal Law – Homicide by Vehicle or Vessel- Penalties (Josette’s Law)

Chairman Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary, and my fellow Judiciary Committee Members,

I am here today to support HB 927, Josette’s Law. This bill was named for Josette Wilson, a young woman who was tragically killed by a drunk driver in 2019. The driver received a mere 5 years in prison while the Wilson family will forever be without their cherished daughter for the rest of their lives.

The purpose of this bill is to change the statutory penalties for violations for homicide by vehicle or vessel. This bill increases the maximum term of imprisonment for the offense of manslaughter by vehicle or vessel from 10 years to 20 years and from 15 years to 30 years for an individual who has previously been convicted of certain other driving –related offenses, and the maximum term of imprisonment for the offense of homicide by motor vehicle while under the influence of alcohol or alcohol per se from 5 to 10 years for an individual convicted of a certain other driving related offense.

Joe Riley from the Maryland State’s Attorney’s office and Edward Coyne from the Carrol County State Attorney’s office are here and can explain in greater detail about the penalty changes.

I urge a favorable report of this legislation that would finally bring Justice to Josette by getting drunk drivers off of our Maryland roads. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Lauren C. Arikan".

Lauren C. Arikan

Delegate, District 7