



State of Maryland
Department of State Police
Government Affairs Unit
Annapolis Office (410) 260-6100

POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

DATE: March 6, 2024

BILL NUMBER: Senate Bill 1081 **POSITION:** Support

BILL TITLE: Education – Public Schools – Driver Education and Transportation to Field Trips

REVIEW AND ANALYSIS

This legislation establishes the Driver Education in Public Schools Grant Program and the State-Aided Institutions Field Trip Program. The legislation changes the fine structure administered by the Motor Vehicle Administration (MVA) for a lapse or termination of insurance. Finally, the bill increases the funding to the Vehicle Theft Prevention Fund.

Under current law, the Vehicle Theft Prevention Fund receives \$2 million from the Uninsured Motorists Fee collected by the MVA. The Vehicle Theft Prevention Council (VTPC) administers the fund, through grant awards the Council will support programs intended to reduce motor vehicle theft, improve administration of motor vehicle theft laws, improve or create programs to eliminate vehicle theft by juveniles, enhance vehicle theft prosecutorial efforts, inform motor vehicle owners of the financial and social costs of vehicle theft, and teach methods of motor vehicle theft prevention.

The VTPC has been receiving the same allocation since 1994 as costs for the grantees have increased substantially over the last 29 years. The VTPC has expanded to fund carjacking programs in the Baltimore County/City and Prince George's County and should this legislation pass the Council would like to provide additional funding for carjacking programs in Anne Arundel, Howard and Montgomery County.

In 2021, there were 11,143 vehicle thefts, an increase from the 10,683 reported in 2020. The unofficial vehicle thefts for 2022 are 13,662 and for 2023 are 33,628 with the biggest increases being in Anne Arundel County, Baltimore City, Baltimore County, Frederick County, Montgomery County and Prince George's County. With this increase in funding the VTPC will continue to fund programs that help fight the increase of vehicle thefts, carjacking and its related crimes.

Senate Bill 1081 provides the Council with the means to increase funding for efforts to reduce auto theft and its related crimes by providing additional funding to those areas mostly impacted by the increases in auto thefts.

For these reasons the Department of State Police urges the Committee to give SB 1081 a favorable report.