

Maryland Senate  
Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 25, 2024

Re: HB 364 – Support

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of District 22 in Prince George’s County, Maryland. I volunteer with several organizations and local committees working to make our streets safer for every person who travels in our county. As a resident of Riverdale Park, I am especially heartbroken and enraged by the preventable deaths of two of my neighbors, 5-year-old Sky Sosa and 10-year-old Shalom Mbah, as they walked across the street, in a marked crosswalk, at a four-way stop, to reach Riverdale Elementary School this fall.

Car crashes kill far too many people in Prince George’s County. Even greater numbers of people experience serious, life-altering injuries. Prince George’s County has the unwanted distinction of leading Maryland and the Washington, DC region in traffic fatalities every year.

These deaths and serious injuries are preventable. We need improved, safer road design. However, a safe transportation system also relies on compliance with traffic control devices. Enforcement of stop signs, therefore, plays an important role in increasing safety.

Local governments in Prince George’s County desperately need access to more tools to keep the public safe on our streets. By authorizing automated enforcement of stop signs, HB 364 provides local government access to additional tools to increase safety, save lives, and spare people and their families from experiencing the impacts of life-altering injuries.

Based on data currently available for 2023<sup>1</sup>, Prince George’s County accounted for over 20% of the traffic fatalities, and nearly 25% of fatalities among people walking and biking, for all of Maryland (see Table 1 below). These rates far exceed the county’s share of the state’s population (15.7%). They also far exceed the rates of fatalities in peer jurisdictions in the state, with larger populations, like Montgomery County.

Prince George’s County’s also leads the Washington, DC region in traffic fatalities annually (see Chart 1 below). The county experiences fatalities among people walking and biking at twice the rate as peer jurisdictions in the DC region.

Again, our county badly needs more tools to develop and operate a safe transportation system. The Maryland General Assembly can help by authorizing local governments to use automated enforcement to enforce compliance with stop signs.

I strongly **support HB 364** and urge the committee to report **favorable** on the bill.

Thank you,

Dan Behrend  
Riverdale Park, MD  
Prince George’s County

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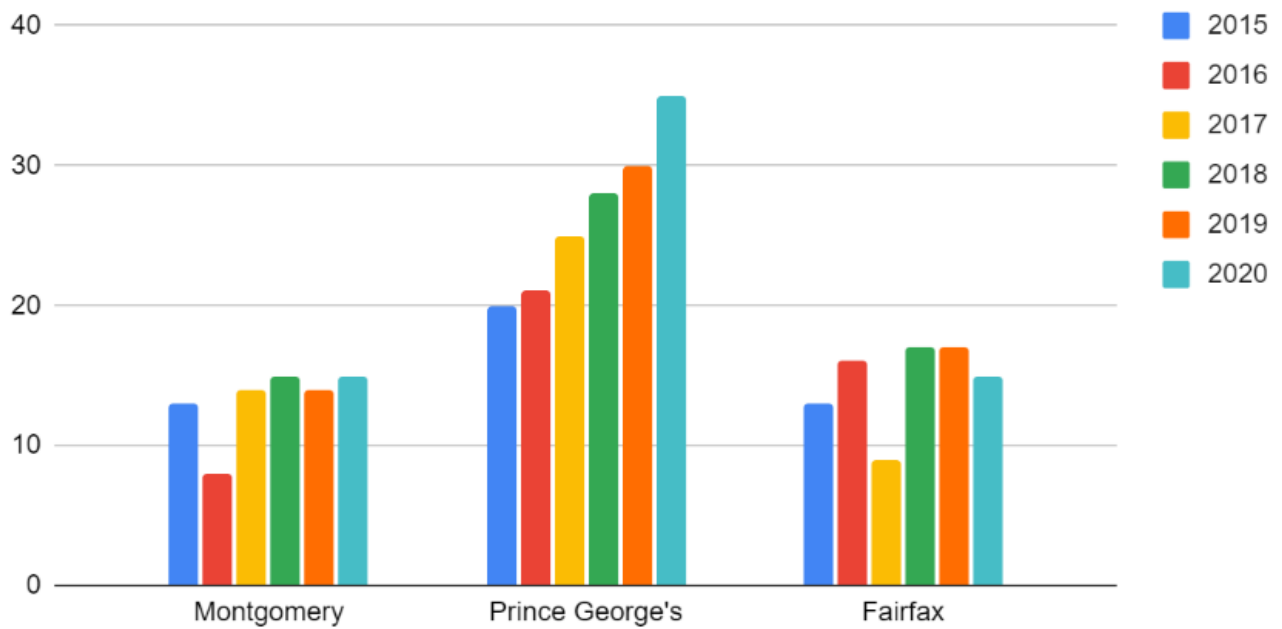
<sup>1</sup> <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>

**Table 1. 2023 Statewide, Prince George’s & Montgomery County Fatal Crashes**

2023 Statewide Crash Data		
	Fatalities	Pedestrians & Bicyclists Fatalities
Statewide	604	170
Prince George’s County	129	42
Montgomery County	44	16

**Chart 1. Prince George’s County Experiences Twice the Rate of Pedestrian Fatalities Compared to Peer Jurisdictions in the Washington, DC Region**

### Pedestrian Fatalities, 2015 to 2020



Source: FARS, TPB Safety Committee