



Statement of Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA)

To the Judicial Proceedings Committee

Chair: William C. Smith Jr.

February 21, 2024

Senate Bill 0724: Motor Vehicles - School Buses - Seat Belts

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Smith Jr., Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the committee, the Maryland Rural Health Association (MRHA) is in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 0724: Motor Vehicles - School Buses - Seat Belts

We can all agree that students standing on school buses can pose several safety concerns, and according to this article, The National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) and the National Academy of Sciences confirmed this design's effectiveness in frontal and rear impact studies. However, concerns have been raised about the effectiveness of compartmentalization in side-impact crashes. The NTSB concluded that "current compartmentalization is incomplete in that it does not protect school bus passengers during lateral impacts with vehicles of large mass and in rollovers because, in such accidents, passengers do not always remain completely within the seating compartment."

*On behalf of the Maryland Rural Health Association,
Jonathan Dayton, MS, NREMT, CNE, Executive Director
jdayton@mdruralhealth.org*