



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Luke Clippinger, Chair and
Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Natasha Mehu, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 15, 2024

RE: **HB 601 – Street Racing and Exhibition Driving – Prohibited Acts,
Enforcement, and Penalties**

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **SUPPORT HB 601**. This bill is intended to address public safety situations that occur from street racing and exhibition driving. The bill increases the points on an individual's license and the penalties associated with these activities.

Across Maryland, there have been continual concerns regarding the safety of our roadways due to the reckless and careless driving engaged in by Street Racers and Exhibition Drivers. The actions of these drivers, who often conduct such activities with large groups of competitors and observers, often cause roadways to be closed to other traffic, including first responders en route to provide care for others. They also cause others using our roadways, including pedestrians and bicyclists, to be placed in grave danger due to their actions. These actions include conducting speed contests on our roads, closing roadways with vehicles and human chains, and conducting exhibition driving activities - all with a careless disregard for others. These activities have been ongoing across our state for several years and require legislation to properly address such activities, help preserve the safety and welfare of all, and achieve our goals of reducing traffic and pedestrian-related fatalities and injuries. Legislation recently passed to establish "special event zones" in Ocean City to address these types of events has been extremely effective.

HB 601 extends these measures statewide. HB 601 proposes a reasonable solution to address the egregious behavior of street racing and exhibition driving.

For this reason, MCPA and MSA **SUPPORT HB 601** and urge a **FAVORABLE** Committee report.