



House Bill 479

Vehicle Laws – Law Enforcement Transport Vehicles – Seat Belts

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**
WITH AMENDMENTS

Date: February 23, 2016

To: Judiciary Committee

From: Natasha Mehu

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 479, **WITH AMENDMENTS**.

HB 479 requires that emergency vehicles operated by law enforcement agencies to transport persons be equipped with a seat belt or safety restraining device approved by the local authority. The seat belts are required for each position in the vehicle a passenger can lawfully occupy.

Many local law enforcement agencies have vehicles that are equipped with seat belts or safety restraining devices and have policies for their use. However not all vehicles are equipped with or designed for seatbelts and there may be situations where they are not feasible for the safety of the officer or passenger.

MACo seeks the following amendment that would clarify local approval for the equipment and use of seatbelts and restraints:

On page 2 in line 6, strike beginning with “APPROVED” through “PASSENGER” in line 18, and substitute, “IN ACCORDANCE WITH AGENCY POLICY FOR TRANSPORT OF PASSENGERS.”

This amendment ensures transport vehicles are properly equipped with restraints and are in line with approved agency policies for use. MACo urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 479.