



Larry Hogan
Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor
Pete K. Rahn
Secretary

Office of the Secretary

December 17, 2018

The Honorable Hans Reimer
Montgomery County Council
Stella B. Werner Council Office Building
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville MD 20850

Dear Councilman Reimer:

I am writing to thank the entire Montgomery County Council for contacting Governor Larry Hogan and me and meeting with Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) Administrator Gregory Slater earlier this month regarding pedestrian safety in Montgomery County, specifically on MD 97 (Georgia Avenue). The Governor asked that I respond on his behalf.

We remain deeply concerned about the recent increases in pedestrian fatalities. Safety is our top priority, and we will continue to work together with our partners at the State and local levels to address this critical issue. The MDOT SHA is taking a more comprehensive review than ever before to understand where and why pedestrian crashes are occurring and over a year ago launched a multi-part approach to find solutions to reduce the rising number of pedestrian fatalities in Maryland. Over the years, changes in uses along the roadway and increases in overall travel and congestion have resulted in a dangerous mix. By understanding the challenges and root causes, MDOT will continue to work with local jurisdictions on the multi-part solution that incorporates land-use, roadway speeds, roadway design, pedestrian infrastructure improvements, education, and law enforcement. New pedestrian infrastructure solutions installed over the last few years include full pedestrian signals, hawk signals or mid-block crosswalks, and traffic calming measures. Working together as partners with federal, State and local government and with businesses, developers, parents, teachers, students, and commuters, we can save lives on our roadways.

As promised by MDOT SHA Administrator Gregory Slater at the November Montgomery County Council meeting, we will continue the dialogue on this very important subject and provide an update on our progress regarding reducing speed limits, traffic calming, new traffic signals, and other engineering and education tactics. This challenge is many layers deep, and the solution needs to be equally dynamic. We need to work together to solve this challenge.

Understanding the strong correlation between higher speeds and serious injury to pedestrians, MDOT SHA is also actively utilizing data to deploy traffic calming measures such as crosswalk markings and narrowing lane widths. In fact, MDOT SHA will be reducing the lane width in the Wheaton urban district along MD 97 to 10-foot travel lanes. In Montgomery County and across the State, MDOT SHA will be implementing measures to improve non-motorized travel safety, including better alignment of the posted speed limit in urban, business areas.

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Thank you again for contacting the Governor and working with us to address these important issues. We appreciate hearing from you. If you need further assistance, please contact Mr. Slater at 410-545-0400 or via email at gslater@sha.state.md.us. He will be happy to assist you. Of course, you can always contact me directly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Pete K. Rahn', written over a faint, larger signature.

Pete K. Rahn
Secretary

cc: The Honorable Gabe Albornoz, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Andrew Friedson, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Evan Glass, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Tom Hucker, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Will Jawando, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Sidney Katz, Vice President, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Nancy King, Senate of Maryland
The Honorable Isiah T. Leggett, Montgomery County Executive
The Honorable Nancy Navarro, President, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Craig Rice, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Hans Reimer, Montgomery County Council
The Honorable Shane Robinson, Maryland House of Delegates
Mr. Gregory Slater, Administrator, MDOT SHA