



DC TRANSPORTATION EQUITY NETWORK

**DC Council Transportation & the Environment Committee and Public Works &
Operations Committee
Joint Hearing on Traffic Enforcement
October 4, 2023**

Good afternoon Chairs Nadeau and Allen, and members of the committees,

My name is Kai Hall, and I'm the coordinator of the DC Transportation Equity Network. We're a coalition of direct-service and advocacy organizations committed to seeing a complete transportation system that accounts for vulnerable residents pushed to the margins of our thriving city.

Our members include MedStar Washington Hospital Center, DC Families for Safe Streets, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association, DC Disability Rights, So Others Might Eat, Friends of the DC Streetcar, DC Primary Care Association, the Citizens Climate Lobby, and Sierra Club DC.

I'm testifying on behalf of the DC TEN in support of all four of the traffic enforcement bills considered by the two committees today.

What do we support?

In 2022, the Washington region saw more than 300 people killed by drivers. According to the Washington Region Alcohol Program, our region averages about 28 DUI arrests and 10 drunk driving crashes every day. **Dangerous drivers are not bound by our jurisdictional boundaries** – a dangerous driver from Arlington or Montgomery County can cause harm in District neighborhoods. That's why we support empowering the OAG to pursue out-of-state civil suits against dangerous drivers, as proposed in the STEER Act.

We strongly support assigning points on ATE-detected violations, as proposed by the ATE Effectiveness Amendment Act. Moving past a fine-based penalty system may encourage behavior change because it'll penalize drivers more equitably,

regardless of their ability to pay. **We also support assigning an extra point for infractions in school zones.** We commend Councilmember Henderson for including mechanisms that promote transparency for how points are assigned and how drivers may remediate their penalties by attending traffic safety courses.

We urge the committee to consider timely notifications of minor infractions detected by ATE cameras, perhaps as a first warning, as recommended at the ATE roundtable. Timely warnings may be more effective at changing driver behavior for first-time offenders than the existing fine structure.

We recognize the need to and support suspending dangerous drivers' licenses and registrations when charged with serious infractions like negligent homicide or hit-and-runs, which is included in the License Suspension Reform Act. We're encouraged to see that the Fraudulent Vehicle Tag Enforcement Act addresses similar accountability concerns for dangerous driving, by making vehicles with fake or obscured tags immediately tow-eligible.

Conclusion

We are happy to see all four of these bills lay out a framework of consequences that are meant to **promote behavior change**.

All DC residents should be able to access their streets safely, no matter what mode of transportation they use. As highlighted in this week's National Week Without Driving, many residents don't have the choice to drive. And yet, non-drivers pay the cost of driving through bodily harm and death, suffering caused by noise and air pollution, and disproportionate investments into infrastructure that supports driving and not public transit and active modes of transportation.

This hearing coincides with Walk to School Day and the National Week Without Driving, which we're organizing for DC. **The National Week Without Driving** is a campaign that raises awareness about the experiences of non-drivers, who are disproportionately people with disabilities and people with low incomes. It's also about residents who choose non-car forms of transportation to get around.

Thank you Chairman Allen for joining Councilmember Trayon White, dozens of ANC commissioners with representation in every ward – a few of whom I saw testify today – WMATA leaders, and hundreds of elected officials across the country, for joining the campaign.

I'm happy to answer any questions you may have. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kai Hall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'K' and 'H'.

Kai Hall

Coordinator

DC Transportation Equity Network