

**J00B01 – MDOT - State Highway Administration
MDOT RESPONSE TO DLS ANALYSIS**

DLS Budget Analysis Issues

Performance Analysis: Managing for Results

1. Safety and Security (Page 5)

SHA should brief the committees on the strategies that it is currently employing or plans to implement to address the upward trend in both the number and rate of traffic-related fatalities.

MDOT Response:

MDOT SHA acknowledges the unfortunate, upward trend in not only total traffic fatalities but also pedestrian fatalities. MDOT SHA continues to work with our partners in the execution of the Strategic Highway Safety Plan with the sole purpose of eliminating fatal and serious injury crashes in Maryland. MDOT SHA is using a mix of intersection and corridor wide strategies along with broader systemic improvements to improve traffic safety for all road users. In FY 2019, MDOT SHA expanded use of Pedestrian Hybrid Beacons (commonly known as HAWK's) and Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacons (RRFB's) along with implementation of low-cost traffic signal modifications that remove vehicle-pedestrian conflicts. MDOT SHA recently approved the use of high visibility, continental crosswalks which have been shown to improve pedestrian safety nationwide. MDOT SHA is also committed to evaluating posted speed limits along corridors in our urban areas and adjusting speed limits as needed to provide a safer system to all our users. Apart from our traditional safety programs that target individual high crash locations, in FY 2019 we completed our first project along I 97, I 695, US 50 corridors around Annapolis aimed at reducing wrong way driving crashes. These crashes represent 0.2 percent of statewide crashes, but they almost always result in a fatality. This is an ongoing systemic program and we are developing similar projects for the I-695 corridor in Baltimore and Harford County. Our Smart Signals projects is also improving safety by reducing peak hour congestion and associated rear end and side swipe collisions.

There are a variety of multidisciplinary efforts planned for 2019 to increase highway safety efforts in the State.

Maryland's five-year [Strategic Highway Safety Plan](#) (SHSP) is our road map for meeting the *Toward Zero Deaths* goal of cutting the number of fatalities and serious injuries on Maryland roads in half by 2030. The plan was developed by a diverse group of partners and stakeholders representing the 4 Es of highway safety – Education, Enforcement, Engineering and Emergency Medical Services.

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DLS Budget Analysis Issues (cont.)

The SHSP's six emphasis areas and strategies guide the State in developing lifesaving programs and partnerships to promote safe driving, walking and biking behaviors. In addition, one quarter of all traffic deaths in the State involve a pedestrian. In Federal Fiscal Year 2019, \$12 million in federal highway safety funds distributed through the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration's Highway Safety Office are supporting efforts statewide to:

- Increase the use of seat belts in all seating positions;
- Prevent impaired, aggressive, and distracted driving;
- Increase the safety of pedestrians, motorcyclists, and bicyclists;
- Promote the correct use of child passenger safety seats;
- Fund overtime enforcement of Maryland's traffic laws;
- Support police training for highway safety and traffic enforcement; and
- Increase the capability and efficiency of Maryland's traffic data systems.

The State is also working with various Maryland jurisdictions to develop local SHSPs that address community-specific traffic issues and complement the broader plan.

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DLS Budget Analysis Issues (cont.)

2. Winter Maintenance and Snow Removal (Page 12)

Included in the Recommended Actions section of this analysis is budget bill language restating the intent of the General Assembly that MDOT continue to increase the SHA snow removal budget by \$5 million per year until the budgeted amount reflects the rolling five-year average of actual snow removal expenditures and also restricting \$5 million of the SHA capital program to be used only for snow removal expenses.

MDOT Response:

Since the increase of \$5 million per year began in FY 2010, MDOT SHA has increased the winter budget from \$21 million to \$71 million. This higher budget provides adequate funding for the fluctuations in snow expenditures. Regardless of budget amount, roadway safety is a priority for MDOT SHA, and winter operations will take place at the levels necessary to ensure safe travels.

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Operating Budget Recommended Actions

1. Add the following language: (Page 29)

It is the intent of the General Assembly that the State Highway Administration increase its budget for snow removal to more accurately reflect actual expenditures. Therefore, funds budgeted for snow removal shall be increased by \$5,000,000 in each fiscal year of the fiscal 2021 to 2025 forecast. In addition, each subsequent financial forecast shall increase the budgeted level of snow removal by \$5,000,000 in each fiscal year until the budgeted level reflects the rolling five-year average of actual snow removal expenses.

MDOT Response:

The Department respectfully does not concur with the recommended language. Over the last 10 years, MDOT SHA increased its snow budget by \$50 million in accordance with previous committee narrative. The higher budget provides adequate funding for fluctuations in expenses.

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PAYGO Budget Recommended Actions

1. Add the following language to the special fund appropriation: (Page 30)

, provided that \$5,000,000 of this appropriation made for the purpose of capital construction may not be expended for that purpose but instead may be used only for snow removal. Funds not expended for this restricted purpose may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall be canceled.

MDOT Response:

The Department respectfully does not concur with the recommended language. The current budget provides an adequate base for the highly variable snow expenses. Further, snow expenses are operating expenses and should not be paid from the capital budget.

2. Add the following language to the special fund appropriation: (Page 30)

, provided that \$29,277 of this appropriation made for the purpose of providing transportation aid to Deer Park in Garrett County may not be expended until the town has submitted the audit reports and the Uniform Financial Reports as required under §§ 16-304 and 16-306 of the Local Government Article for fiscal 2015, 2016, 2017 and 2018. Funds restricted pending the receipt of these documents may not be transferred by budget amendment or otherwise to any other purpose and shall be canceled.

MDOT Response:

The Department concurs with the recommended language.