

AAA Bill of Rights For the Nation's Motorists On Transportation Funding

The United States requires a new vision for transportation that addresses 21st Century needs, ensures broad access and adequate funding, as well as equitably allocates benefits and payments among users.

A new transportation vision must ensure that the system significantly enhances safety, mobility, and reliability to provide an appropriate return on investment to motorists who will continue to pay most of the costs.

Transportation improvements should be based upon needs that are clearly identified, and outcomes that are supported by research and assured through application of performance standards.

Transportation taxes, fees and other revenue collected from motorists must be equitable and transparent. Transportation agencies must demonstrate to the public that transportation resources are managed wisely and efficiently.

Motorists must receive direct and recognizable improvements to their travel experience if they are asked to pay more.

Revenues generated from taxes, fees, and other pricing mechanisms paid by motorists must be dedicated solely to meeting identified transportation needs and protected from diversion to other uses.

Funding alternatives to supplement or eventually replace motor vehicle fuel taxes must be carefully evaluated as to their ability to be efficiently implemented, accepted by the public, allocated fairly, fully dedicated to transportation needs, and be resistant to fraud and evasion.

Public-private partnerships to increase transportation investments must be carefully managed to ensure that motorist fees are fair and equitable, that motorist fees are not diverted to non-transportation purposes, and that the facility is consistently maintained and improved.

Publicly owned transportation facilities should be sold or leased to private interests only if agreements are in place requiring the maintenance of high levels of service and continuing public oversight. Revenues resulting from the sale or lease must be used only for transportation purposes and compensate the public for the full value of the facility.

Transportation fees, taxes, and other revenue collected from motorists should fairly represent their use of the system, and all transportation system users should bear a proportionate share of financing the system.



A message from the President & CEO of AAA Mid-Atlantic

On November 1, 2010, AAA Mid-Atlantic celebrated its 110th Anniversary.

Over those 110 years much has changed and AAA Mid-Atlantic has grown to serve nearly four million members from New Jersey to Virginia.

However, one thing has remained the same: AAA works tirelessly to protect the rights, interests, safety and mobility of our members and all travelers.

It is from this unique perspective that we present this report to the Legislature.

The unmistakable message from voters after the 2010 election was a commitment to fiscal responsibility. The message was that the public wants accountability, results and transparency in seeing how its taxes translate into tangible benefits.

We hope this “TripTik” provides you with direction as you weigh decisions, perhaps none so challenging as jobs and transportation needs.

AAA advocacy concerning transportation and safety remains unchanged and typically enjoys broad support. It is in this spirit that we will continue to work in a bipartisan fashion to advance the safety, reliability and improvement of our highway network.

To those who have worked with us, we thank you and ask for your continued support. For those new to the Maryland Legislature, please know that you can call on us for our guidance on a wide range of safety, transportation and motorist/consumer issues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Donald R. Gagnon".

Donald R. Gagnon
President and CEO
AAA Mid-Atlantic



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AAA, An Overview

For more than 100 years, AAA has been an advocate for the motorist and traveler. We have fought legislative battles for motorists, protected them against unduly restrictive legislation, and worked against harsh and unjust prosecutions. AAA has been in the forefront of the movement for adequate roads and safe use of those roads. We have fought for equitable taxation and stood constant watch over the rights and interests of America's travelers.

AAA is a federation of affiliated motor clubs with more than 1,100 offices in the U.S. and Canada. The organization offers personal service through its network of more than 38,000 full-time employees.

One in three licensed drivers has a AAA membership, which entitles them to special services, valuable savings, and priceless security. With more than 51 million members, AAA is the largest paid membership organization in North America.

AAA Mid-Atlantic

A not-for-profit, fully tax-paying organization, AAA Mid-Atlantic is based in Wilmington, Delaware and serves nearly four million members in Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Virginia and the District of Columbia. AAA Mid-Atlantic continually monitors and responds to state legislative and regulatory measures that affect the traveling public and focuses special attention on three high risk groups – children, teens, and seniors.

While known primarily for providing emergency road service, maps and travel publications, AAA Mid-Atlantic works to make life easier, simpler and better for people on the go. Today, this means helping members not just on the road but also in other areas - whether at home, on vacation or shopping. With products and services such as insurance, travel planning, credit cards, loans, and "Show Your Card and Save" discounts, AAA Mid-Atlantic provides members countless ways to save time, money and trouble every day.

The Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Safety and Education

The Mid-Atlantic Foundation for Safety and Education, established in 2002, is a non-profit 501(c)(3) tax-exempt corporation dedicated to educating, training and raising the level of traffic and travel safety awareness for all. Through generous contributions from AAA Mid-Atlantic members and others, the Foundation works to make schools, communities and roads safer places for everyone by providing resources and educational programs for children, teens, adults and seniors.

Since motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death for 15- to 20-year olds, teen drivers are an important area of focus for AAA Mid-Atlantic. As a leader in teen driver safety for 75 years, AAA has developed a suite of research-based tools to help guide families through the learning-to-drive process.

TeenDriving.AAA.com provides parents and teens with everything they need to know, when they need it and all in one place.

Some of the programs supported by member contributions include:

- AAA School Safety Patrol Programs and Training
- Elementary Education Using “Otto the Auto”
- Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Education
- High School Alcohol Awareness and Safety Belt Programs
- Adult Crossing Guard Training
- Senior Mobility

<http://midatlantic.aaa.com/Foundation/Overview>



INTRODUCTION

Over the years, AAA Mid-Atlantic has regularly surveyed motorists to ensure that we know their opinions about key issues impacting their safety and mobility. With approximately one in three licensed drivers in our region being a AAA member, knowing their positions is critical for us if we are to effectively and credibly represent them.

The findings that follow, our AAA Transportation Survey 2011, are the results of a scientifically conducted poll of licensed drivers in the state. The poll was commissioned by AAA Mid-Atlantic and was conducted in December 2010. (See p. 19 for detailed poll information).

Questions this year, while covering many topics, focused on two key areas: distracted driving, particularly concerning cell phone and texting instrument usage, as well as, transportation finances, given the current funding crisis that so directly impacts both mobility and safety.

We share these results with you, our policy leaders and lawmakers, in hopes that these results, drawn from the motorists in Maryland, will assist you, in dealing with the very tough decisions that you will be called upon to make in this Legislative Session.

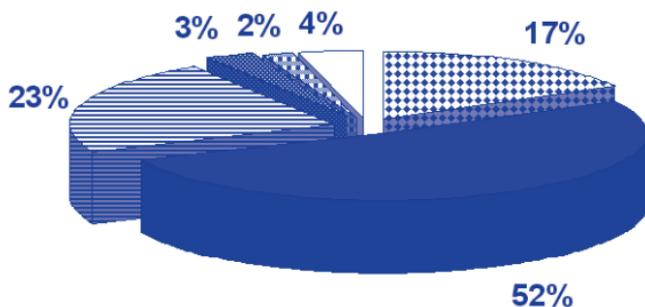
If you have any questions or wish to discuss any of these findings, or if AAA Mid-Atlantic can be of assistance to you in any way, please contact any of our Public and Government Affairs Legislative team, whose contact information is provided on p. 20.



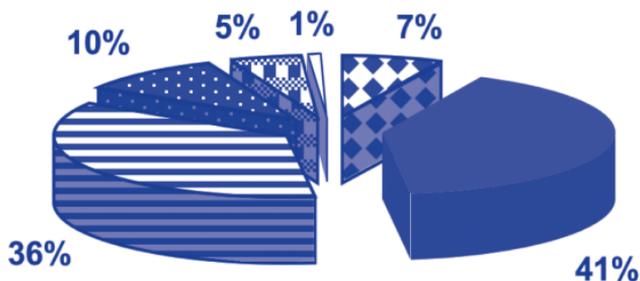
ROADS & BRIDGES

When it comes to global competitiveness, stability of our economy and our quality of life, America's transportation system is at the heart of it all. Yet, only a small percentage of motorists give Maryland's roads and bridges top marks, with 17% saying the Interstates, 7% saying local roads and 6% saying bridges deserve an "A."

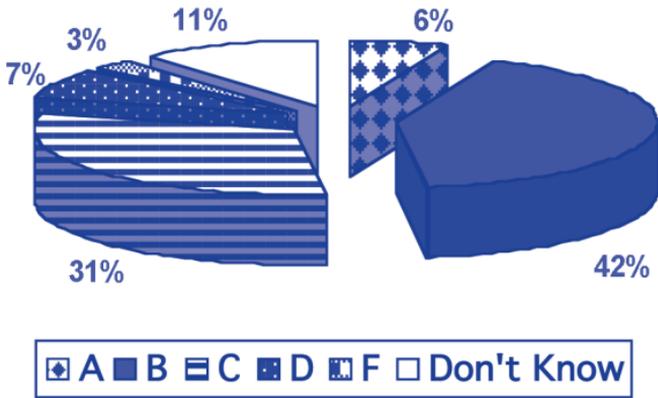
Q. Grading the Interstate Highway System



Q. Grading Local Roads (US or Major State Routes)



Q. Grading Bridges





MAINTENANCE & CONSTRUCTION COSTS

It costs huge dollars to build and maintain our roads and bridges, Maryland, like many other states, currently has a major transportation funding crisis that has even resulted in the appointment of a Blue Ribbon Commission. Clearly there are no easy choices and Marylanders are, understandably, not excited about seeing their taxes and fees increased further to cover shortfalls, especially given frequent raids on the Transportation Trust Fund for non-transportation expenses.

Revenue-raising options that garnered the strongest opposition were the proposal to charge drivers a fee for miles driven with 86% of motorists objecting, followed closely by raising the sales tax which had 81% of motorists opposed. Congestion tolling-imposing tolls to travel on roads during peak travel periods-was opposed by almost as many motorists with 78% opposition.

Raising the gas tax, one of the most likely solutions, was also not popular with 64% strongly opposed and another 12% somewhat opposed.

The revenue-raising proposal that was most palatable was charging tolls on newly constructed bridges and roads with about half of Marylanders (49%) supporting. However, fully two-thirds of Maryland motorists (66%) oppose charging tolls on existing roads and bridges.

Increasing license and/or registration fees, although still unpopular, did garner 35% support.

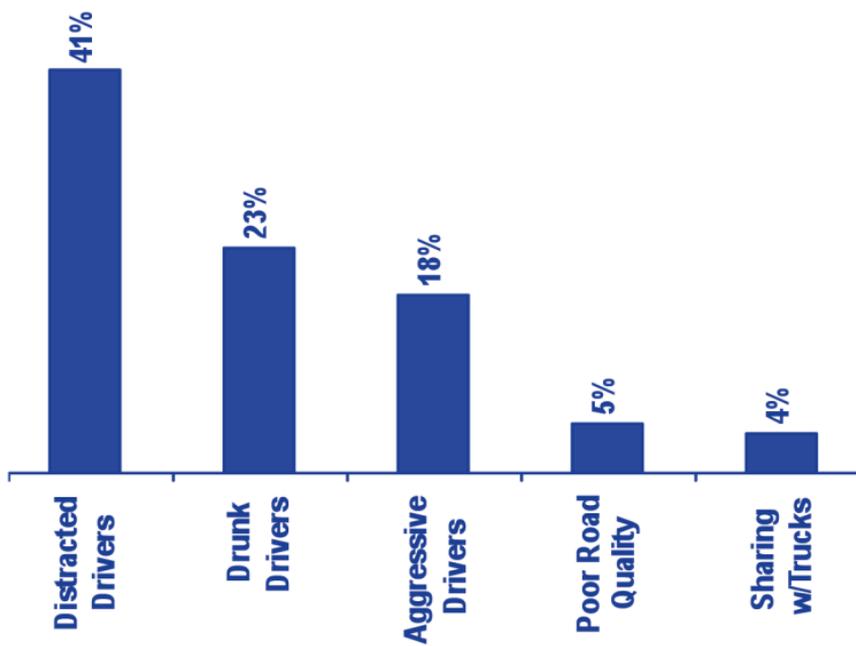
	Strongly Favor	Some-what Favor	Some-what Oppose	Strongly Oppose
Increased gasoline taxes	9%	15%	12%	64%
Charging drivers a fee based on the number of miles they drive	4%	8%	16%	70%
Imposing tolls to drive on main roads during peak travel times	5%	15%	14%	64%
Increasing sales tax	4%	13%	17%	64%
Charging Tolls on existing roads and bridges	8%	23%	20%	46%
Charging tolls only on newly constructed bridges and highways	15%	34%	21%	28%
Increasing license and/or registration fees	10%	25%	17%	45%



SAFETY CONCERNS

Three major safety issues comprise 82% of the primary concerns voiced by Maryland drivers in the 2011 poll. More than 4 in 10 (41%) list distracted drivers as their top worry. A distant second is drunk driving (23%), followed by aggressive drivers (18%).

Q. Which of the following is your top safety concern as a motorist?





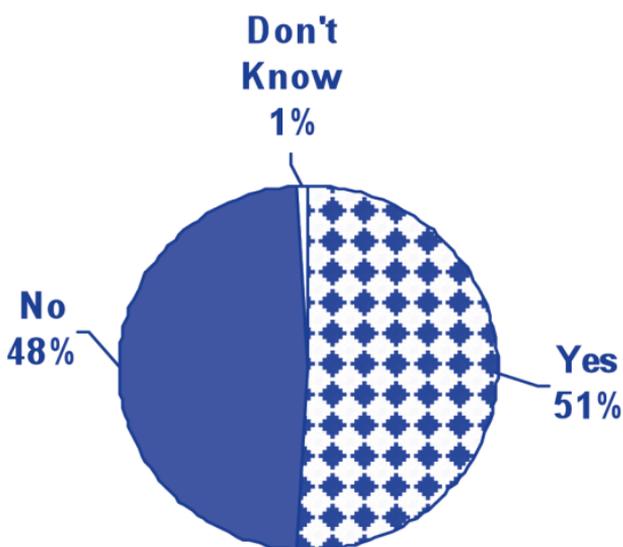
DISTRACTED DRIVING

A surprising (51%) of Maryland drivers polled say they have either been in an accident or a “near miss” caused by a distracted driver. Meanwhile, a solid 77% say they do not talk on their cell phone or send text messages while driving.

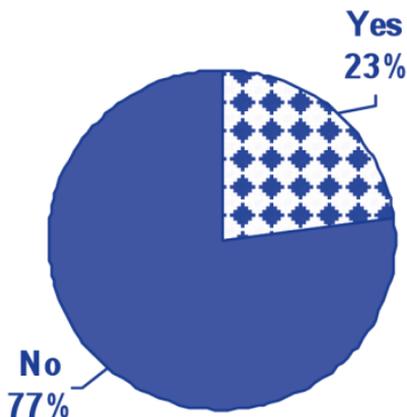
In addition, 53% report a reduction from one year ago in the frequency in which they use their cell phones while driving. Yet, nearly four in ten (37%) say their frequency of cell phone use behind the wheel remains unchanged.

Of those reporting reduced cell phone use while driving, motivational factors for doing so ran the gamut. A total of 27% said they have been heavily influenced by public-awareness campaigns; 21% fear receiving a ticket or fine; and 19% fear the guilt of causing a crash due to being distracted.

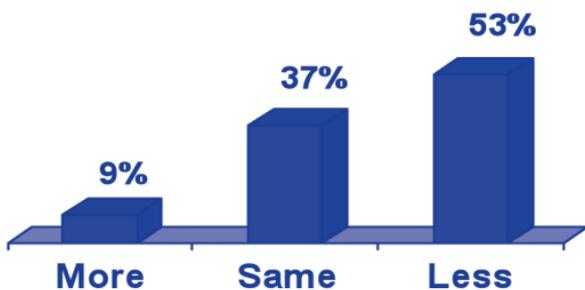
Q. Have you ever been in an accident caused by a distracted driver?



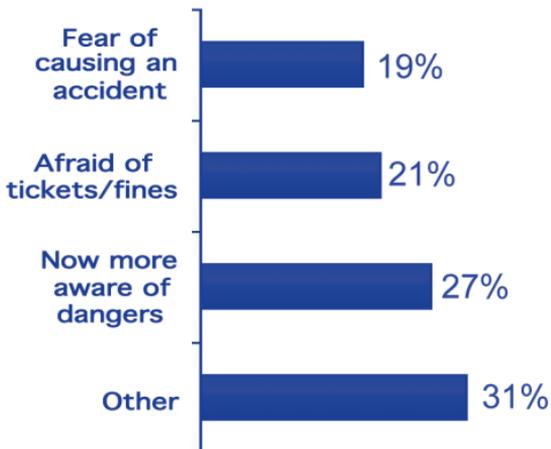
Q. Do you ever use your cell phone to talk or text while you drive?



Q. If yes, do you use your phone more frequently, less frequently, or about the same amount while driving compared to a year ago?



Q. If less frequently, what motivated you to reduce the amount you use your cell phone while driving?



When asked to consider potential measures to achieve greater focus behind the wheel, three-quarters of respondents strongly favored the following:

- o increasing public awareness about the dangers of distracted driving (76%)
- o banning the use of hand-held cell phones while driving (75%)-which Maryland has already done
- o establishing stricter penalties for distracted driving, including greater enforcement of Maryland’s current ban on teens driving while talking on cell phones (74%)

Q. Many states and local jurisdictions, including Maryland, have already enacted laws related to distracted driving. Do you favor or oppose each of the following measures to reduce the amount of distracted driving?

Increasing public awareness about the dangers of distracted driving				
Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK
76%	15%	4%	3%	2%

Banning the use of hand-held cell phones while driving				
Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK
75%	12%	6%	6%	1%

Establishing stricter penalties for distracted driving, including more enforcement of Maryland’s teen cell phone ban				
Strongly Favor	Somewhat Favor	Somewhat Oppose	Strongly Oppose	DK
75%	12%	6%	6%	1%

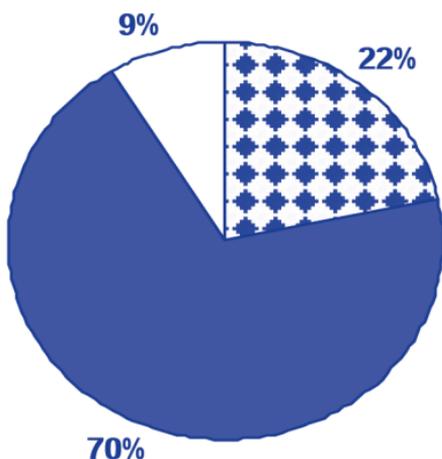


CHESAPEAKE BAY BRIDGE SAFETY

Traffic on the Chesapeake Bay Bridge often runs in two directions with no barrier separation between opposing traffic flows other than a double line. Research shows that many of the most serious automobile crashes on the bridge occur when two-way traffic flow is in operation, with only a double yellow line separating the two lanes of traffic. Adding barriers to improve safety on the bridge is favored by 70% of poll respondents. Twenty-two percent say it's fine as is, with 9% not sure.

Q. Which statement do you agree with more?

- The Bay Bridge is safe and does not need any barriers to separate the traffic flow.**
- Barriers should be added to separate traffic flows on the Bay Bridge to improve traffic safety.**
- Don't Know**



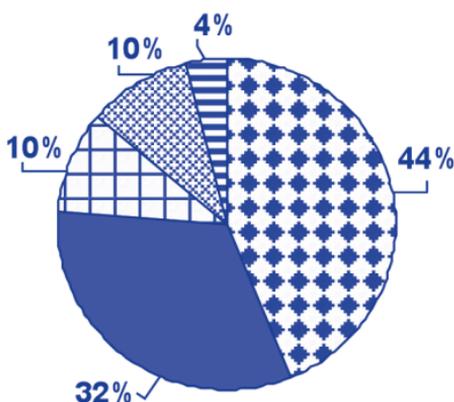


MOBILITY

As the U.S. population has grown by 60 million people in the past 20 years, the number of vehicle miles traveled increased by 39%. Meanwhile, actual road miles have increased by only 4%.

More than three-quarters of Maryland drivers strongly (44%) or somewhat (32%) favor construction of new roads and bridges to help reduce traffic congestion created by increased population growth and travel.

Q. Do you favor or oppose the construction of new roads and bridges to help reduce the traffic congestion created by increased population growth and travel?

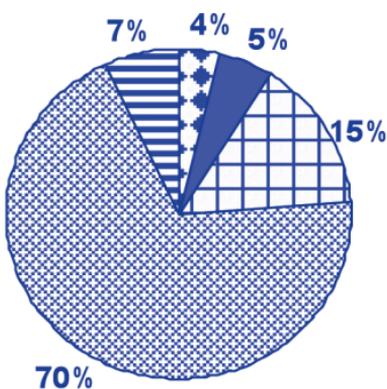




LARGE TRUCKS

The state's current law limits the size of large trucks to 80,000 pounds and 53 feet in length, and Maryland motorists overwhelmingly don't want to think about increasing them: 85% oppose any increase with 70% strongly opposing any size increase, and another 15% somewhat opposing.

Q. Do you favor or oppose longer and heavier trucks on our roads?





A CALL TO ACTION

As an organization founded to represent motorists' rights, AAA Mid-Atlantic supports a multi-modal transportation system that provides safe and accessible choices for all users and their personal travel needs.

We believe responsible advocacy in the public policy arena is essential for all of us to continue to enjoy our freedom of mobility and to do so safely.

The following are just a few key points regarding AAA Mid-Atlantic's stand on critical issues.

Transportation Funding

AAA opposes policies reducing or withholding federal transportation funding to states that fail to meet arbitrary VMT (vehicle miles traveled) reductions. AAA encourages innovative transportation finance measures that will offset the long-term impact of projected decreases in gas tax revenues.

AAA will continue to seek an adequately funded transportation system that returns the surface transportation program to a pay-as-you-go, user-fee funded model. A user-financed transportation program is important not only to the nation's deficit reduction efforts, but to ensuring increased safety, improving mobility and growing the economy over the long term.

Distracted Driving

AAA supports a comprehensive approach to addressing distracted driving. Any legislative or administrative proposal to address the issue should be based on sound research and/or fundamental safety principles, and include a significant educational component. Research continues to show that text-messaging while driving is a dangerous activity. AAA believes texting while driving should be illegal. Laws prohibiting such practices should be comparable to those on the books for other dangerous moving violations, with considerable fines and accrual of demerit points assessed.

Electronic Enforcement (Speed & Red Light)

AAA realizes the role that automated enforcement can play in improved safety for motorists, pedestrians and others who use the road by improving compliance with red lights, speed limits and other traffic-control devices. However, AAA opposes the use of photo enforcement systems that undermine fair and reasonable laws and that will do little to improve public safety. Photo enforcement cameras should be used solely to promote traffic safety, not generate revenues for government or technology vendors. Photo enforcement camera programs should be operated only under the direct supervision and control of state-certified law enforcement personnel.

Public-Private Partnerships

Public-private partnerships to increase transportation investments must be carefully managed to ensure that motorists' fees are fair and equitable, and that they are not diverted to non-transportation purposes. Publicly owned transportation facilities should not be transferred to private interests unless the agreements require the maintenance of high levels of service and remain under public oversight.

Event Data Recorders (EDRs) – “Black Boxes”

AAA strongly supports protecting the privacy of automobile owners whose vehicles are equipped with Event Data Recorders (EDRs), also known as “black boxes.” All manufacturers selling vehicles in the United States should be required to disclose on new-vehicle window stickers the inclusion of such devices on all vehicles so equipped. AAA supports federal efforts requiring data standardization to facilitate uniform access by all users.

Alternative Fuels

AAA is a staunch advocate for implementation of an alternative energy strategy and encourages the government to work with the private sector to develop alternative fuel and vehicle programs. Specifically, AAA encourages further research into sustainable and renewable fuels; fuel-cell and battery technology; and other low- or zero-emission vehicle technologies. If alcohol fuel blends or other alternative fuels are exempted from federal or state gasoline taxes, federal and state highway trust funds should be compensated for any resulting loss of revenues.



DETAILS OF STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

The 2011 poll results were from the findings of a survey of 401 licensed drivers in the state of Maryland conducted in December 2010. The survey was designed by Terry Madonna Opinion Research on behalf of AAA Mid-Atlantic and the interviewing was conducted by Susquehanna Polling of Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. The sample error for the total sample is plus or minus 4.9 percent. In addition to sampling error, this poll is also subject to other sources of non-sampling error. Generally speaking, two sources of error concern researchers most. Non-response bias is created when selected participants either choose not to participate in the survey or are unavailable for interviewing. Response errors are the product of the question and answer process. Surveys that rely on self-reported behaviors and attitudes are susceptible to biases related to the way respondents process and respond to survey questions.



**AAA MID-ATLANTIC
PUBLIC & GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE CONTACTS**

Ronald W. Kosh, Esq
Vice President
One River Place
Wilmington, DE 19801
rkosh@aaamidatlantic.com
(302) 299-4427

Mahlon G. 'Lon' Anderson
Managing Director
1405 G Street, NW
Washington, DC 20005
landerson@aaamidatlantic.com
(202) 481-6820

Ragina C. Averella
Manager
8600 LaSalle Road, Suite 639
Towson, Maryland 21286
raverella@aaamidatlantic.com
(410) 616-1900 ext. 61152

Christine S. Delise
8600 LaSalle Road, Suite 639
Towson, Maryland 21286
cdelise@aaamidatlantic.com
(410) 616-1900 ext. 61153

Joseph C. Green
Executive Vice President
G.S. Proctor & Associates
29 Francis Street
Annapolis, MD 21401
jgreen@gsproctor.com
(410) 280-5088