

**HB019-Safe Walk to School Act--EHEA-CJW-Fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Diana Younts

Position: FAV



**Committee: Education, Health & Environmental Affairs**  
**Testimony on: HB0019 - Education-School Construction-Pedestrian Safety Plans (Safe Walk to School Act)**  
**Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition**  
**Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair**  
**Position: Favorable**  
**Hearing Date: April 5, 2022**

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB0019. The MLC Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB0019. We believe this bill would help to prioritize traffic safety and could potentially prevent needless crashes involving students and their families near school buildings throughout the state. We realize that many people are working to educate students about streets safety, which is good. Many kids in Maryland are taught about cross walks and distracted driving, and asked to not wear ear buds or text while crossing a street.

But we need to think about kids, not just cars, when we build and renovate our neighborhoods, and that includes school renovations. Engineering and construction planning can go a long way to preventing pedestrian dangers for all. Every community has its local schools, and almost every neighborhood in our state county is abutted by at least one school building, especially in urban areas. The impact of traffic around those schools is tremendous. With each school holding as many 1400 children, there are literally hundreds of parents doing drop-off and pick up in our neighborhoods and hundreds of big yellow buses circling around daily. Many of our neighborhoods lack pedestrian infrastructure such as sidewalks.

Many schools are near multilane roads that lack space for pedestrians and have few cross walks. Too often in the construction and renovation of schools, little attention is paid to traffic safety and it is often too dangerous for kids to bike or walk to school. In an age where we are trying hard to reduce the impact of climate change and get our kids to live more healthy lifestyles by exercising more, this just seems wrong. Kids should be able to walk safely if they live within the school's mandated walk radius. Currently, residents find that they are often not consulted when it comes to traffic impact of a new or renovated and expanded school, despite having decades of experience navigating their own local streets. Pedestrian

data needs to be gathered and taken seriously.

In some neighborhoods, parents have been able to form traffic safety groups and volunteer at pick up and drop off times to increase safety. But poverty isn't just about lack of money, it is also lack of time. At many urban schools where traffic issues are most pressing, parents are working multiple jobs just to make ends meet. Pedestrian safety often remains a large and often unaddressed need. It is not equitable to expect that all parents have the means to compensate for bad street design by taking time away from work or adjusting their work schedules and routines. It would be far more effective to build school buildings that function with pedestrian needs in mind from the start. We can alleviate the burden of traffic safety from principals and parents by prioritizing pedestrian and bike safety during construction.

We therefore support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

**MLC Climate Justice Wing:**

Assateague Coastal Trust  
Maryland Legislative Coalition  
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights  
Chesapeake Climate Action Network  
WISE  
Frack Free Frostburg  
Mountain Maryland Movement  
Clean Water Action  
Howard County Indivisible  
Howard County Sierra Club  
Columbia Association Climate change and sustainability advisory committee  
HoCo Climate Action  
CHEER  
Climate XChange - Maryland  
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/  
National Parks Conservation Association  
350 Montgomery County  
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization  
The Climate Mobilization Montgomery County  
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions  
Montgomery Countryside Alliance

Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee  
Audubon Naturalist Society  
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church  
Environmental Justice Ministry  
Coalition For Smarter Growth  
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County  
MCPS Clean Energy Campaign  
MoCo DCC  
Potomac Conservancy  
Casa de Maryland  
Nuclear Information & Resource Service  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
Laurel Resist  
Greenbelt Climate Action Network  
Maryland League of Conservation Voters  
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland  
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial Cafos  
Wicomico NAACP  
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility  
Chispa MD  
Climate Law & Policy Project

Maryland Poor Peoples Campaign  
Labor for Sustainability  
The Nature Conservancy  
Clean Air Prince Georges  
350 Baltimore  
Maryland Environmental Health Network  
Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis  
Talbot Rising  
Adat Shalom Climate Action  
Chesapeake Earth Holders  
Climate Parents of Prince Georges  
Echotopia  
Maryland NAACP State Conference,  
Environmental Justice Committee

**HB19\_Solomon\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jared Solomon

Position: FAV

JARED SOLOMON  
Legislative District 18  
Montgomery County

Appropriations Committee

Subcommittees

Education and Economic Development

Oversight Committee on Personnel



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 222  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
301-858-3130 · 410-841-3130  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3130  
Fax 301-858-3233 · 410-841-3233  
Jared.Solomon@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Sponsor Testimony on HB 19 – The Safe Walk to School Act**

**Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**

**April 5<sup>th</sup>, 1:00pm**

Chair Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, Colleagues,

Thank you for the opportunity to present today on my legislation HB 19, The Safe Walk to School Act. It's an honor to serve on this committee and to testify before you this afternoon.

Crossing the road can be a dangerous undertaking in Maryland. Almost everyone is a pedestrian at one time or another so pedestrian safety affects all of us. Multiple challenges face us as we work to keep pedestrians safe – communities and neighborhoods built without crosswalks, young students walking to school, distracted cell phone users not paying attention, and a road network designed for speed and cars not walkers and bikers. It is time for schools, parents, and communities to work together to ensure safe routes for all pedestrians, particularly families and students walking to and from school.

According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration:

- In 2019, 6,205 pedestrians were killed and another 76,000 were injured nationwide.<sup>1</sup>
- A pedestrian was killed every 85 minutes in traffic crashes in 2019.<sup>2</sup>

In Maryland, the number of pedestrian fatalities continues to mount:

- On average, over the past five years in Maryland, 120 pedestrians have been killed and 2,772 have been injured each year.<sup>3</sup>
- In 2020, there were 131 pedestrians were killed and nearly 2,338 injured.<sup>4</sup>
- In 2020, 16 bicyclists were killed and over 600 were injured.<sup>5</sup>
- Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been fewer cars on the road, but the rate of speed has increased dramatically. According to the Maryland State Police, 69% of speeding citations issued from March 16 to April 17 2021 cited drivers exceeding posted speed limits by 20 mph or higher. More than 375 citations noted speeds of 90

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nhtsa.gov/road-safety/pedestrian-safety>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

mph or more.<sup>6</sup> This reckless driving poses a particular danger to students walking to school.

Pedestrians should feel safe at all times for making environmentally friendly choices of choosing to walk places instead of relying on transportation.

This bill is simple and straightforward. It requires school districts to develop pedestrian safety plans as part of the school construction process when building new schools or building significant new additions to existing schools.

Specifically, the bill requires that:

- 1) School districts seeking state funds for the construction of a new school or additions to an existing school, which would increase the capacity by more than 100 students, to submit a pedestrian safety plan to the IAC;
- 2) The safety plan must identify existing and potential safe routes for students to walk or bike to school;
- 3) The safety plan must evaluate existing infrastructure, including sidewalks, along current and potential routes to determine if increased capacity is needed;
- 4) An analysis of existing and potential school zones, including the need for expanding school zones on state and county roads; and
- 5) Schools districts must submit documentation of public participation related to the safety plan including minutes from a public meeting.

This all must be done in collaboration with local Departments of Transportation and the State Highway Administration as needed. By bringing together schools, community stakeholders, students and parents, this bill provides a critical step forward in developing comprehensive plans to protect our children as they travel to and from school.

The bill passed the House Appropriations Committee 18-2 and the full House 114-20. I urge you to once again provide a favorable report on HB 19.

---

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.thebaynet.com/articles/0520/maryland-pedestrian-fatalities-decrease-in-2019-overall-roadway-fatalities-increase.html#:~:text=Glen%20Burnie%2C%20Md.,compared%20to%20133%20in%202018.>

# **HB0019 for Senate - Safe Walk to School Act - Test**

Uploaded by: Joseph Jakuta

Position: FAV

**Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs**  
**Testimony on: HB 19 - "Safe Walk to School Act"**  
**Organization: Climate Parents of Prince George's**  
**Person Submitting: Joseph Jakuta, Lead Volunteer**  
**Position: Favorable**  
**Hearing Date: April 5, 2022**



Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for considering our testimony in support of HB 19, the "Safe Walk to School Act". Climate Parents is a campaign to reduce climate change causing pollution in our schools and our group is active in Prince George's County. In particular, we are currently working directly with Prince George's County Public Schools (PGCPS) technical staff and other advocates to develop a Climate Action Plan for PGCPS as part of a Prince George's County Board of Education Focus Workgroup.

Schools that are safe to walk or bicycle to are an important asset for our children. Studies have found that increased physical activity leads to improved academic performance.<sup>1</sup> There is numerous evidence linking health and well being with increased physical activity.<sup>2</sup> As students age and mature, being able to access school on their own also allows for more opportunities for extracurricular activities, an increased relationship with the learning environment, and a greater sense of independence.

There are other benefits from decreasing the number of vehicles at schools, which would happen if schools were safer to walk or bike to. There would be a decrease in the amount of vehicles idling at pick up and dropoff, which cleans the air and thus very important for people suffering from asthma.<sup>3</sup> Decreasing the number of vehicles also will lead to less accidents involving personal vehicles and students, which is a concern given the high rates of distracted driving that have been observed at schools.<sup>4</sup> In fact, a 2009 survey found that 30 percent of people cited dangerous walking conditions as the largest impediment to walking to school behind distance.<sup>5</sup>

Since April 2021 the previously mentioned Focus Workgroup has completed a great amount of fact finding, including conducting multiple surveys of students. While electric buses are the most popular transportation solution and necessary for most students, there is a significant number of students that must walk or bike due to their proximity or cannot bus home due to extracurriculars and need safe routes (estimates from 2009 found nationally that about 13% of students walk or bike).<sup>6</sup> The PGCPS students made it clear that having safe routes to school, with good sidewalks, bike lanes, crossing guards, and other safety features is vitally important to their ability to safely arrive at school and return home. The "Safe Walk to School Act" would be a large step in the right direction towards making their trips safe.

---

<sup>1</sup> Center for Disease Control. 2010. "The Association Between School-Based Physical Activity, Including Physical Education, and Academic Performance." [https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health\\_and\\_academics/pdf/pa-pe\\_paper.pdf](https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/health_and_academics/pdf/pa-pe_paper.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> American Health Association. "What's the Link Between Physical Activity and Health?" <https://www.heart.org/en/health-topics/cardiac-rehab/getting-physically-active/whats-the-link-between-physical-activity-and-health>

<sup>3</sup> Department of Energy. "Reducing Vehicle Idling Time at School Helps Kids—and Parents—Breathe Easier." <https://www.energy.gov/energysaver/articles/reducing-vehicle-idling-time-school-helps-kids-and-parents-breathe-easier>

<sup>4</sup> Safe Kids Worldwide. "Alarming Dangers in School Zones." [https://www.safekids.org/sites/default/files/alarming\\_dangers\\_in\\_school\\_zones.pdf](https://www.safekids.org/sites/default/files/alarming_dangers_in_school_zones.pdf)

<sup>5</sup> Safe Routes to School. [http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/the\\_decline\\_of\\_walking\\_and\\_bicycling.cfm](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/the_decline_of_walking_and_bicycling.cfm)

<sup>6</sup> Safe Routes to School. [http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/the\\_decline\\_of\\_walking\\_and\\_bicycling.cfm](http://guide.saferoutesinfo.org/introduction/the_decline_of_walking_and_bicycling.cfm)

There is also support at the administrative level in PGCPS for this type of approach. At their March 24, 2022 meeting the Board of Education discussed several environmentally related school bills that would assist the school system.<sup>7</sup> PGCPS's CEO Dr. Monica Goldson spoke of the long-term benefits that safer routes to schools would bring, specifically it could allow for bus routes to be eliminated and thus reduce the impacts of bus driver shortages in the longer term. This could happen since some bus routes are necessary to transport students that live near to the schools, but cannot walk due to unsafe walking conditions.

Our students deserve to be able to get to school safely. If they live too close to be bussed, have to stay late for football practice, want to come early for tutoring, or just want to walk home with friends, we should remember that almost all of them cannot drive and they need to be able to access their schools safely.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.

---

<sup>7</sup> March 24 Prince George's County Board of Education Meeting. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QrjTeLypLRY>

# **Bike MD 2022 Pedestrian Safety Act testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joshua Feldmark

Position: FAV



HB19 – Education – School Construction – Pedestrian Safety Plans (Safe Walk to School Act)  
Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

April 5, 2022

Josh Feldmark

[joshua@bikemd.org](mailto:joshua@bikemd.org)

Position: Support

My name is Joshua Feldmark and I write this as a representative of Bike Maryland. We represent cyclists of all abilities across the state, cyclists who ride 5 miles around the park with their families, for transportation, to a 100 mile ride. Bike Maryland has over 18,000 members from across the state. Additionally, we consistently organize or advocate on behalf of pedestrians and many other non-vehicle transportation users.

Ultimately, our organization is about “mode shift” to walking, biking and other non-passenger vehicle transportation through all levels of our transportation infrastructure.

Mode shift will only be successful, however, if people feel and are safe when walking or cycling. There are nearly 3,000 pedestrians injured or killed annually in Maryland and the number of pedestrian fatalities has continued to climb in recent years. Additionally, low-income communities experience twice as many pedestrian fatalities as wealthier communities.

This bill tackles a key component in this overall campaign to make walking and biking safe and accessible, integrating plans into school construction. Making sure kids have safe accessible routes to school will help create the overall culture shift and as you know this bill will push school districts to integrate comprehensive safe routes to school planning and assessments into the overall building and expansions of schools.

The truth is that this proposal is where we can all agree. It should be safe for kids to walk to school and making sure that happens is a fundamental part of the design of the schools. This is a step that has been desperately needed for many years and so believe strongly that it is long overdue and support this whole heartedly.

We urge a favorable report

**HB19\_Written Testimony \_ April 5\_22\_Daphnis.docx (**

Uploaded by: Kristy Daphnis

Position: FAV

WRITTEN TESTIMONY - April 5, 2022

**(HB 19), Education - The Safe Walk to School Act.**

Testimony Delivered by: Kristy Daphnis, Montgomery County Resident, Local Parent Teacher Association Board Member, and Chair of the Montgomery County Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Traffic Safety Advisory Committee

Bill Position: Support

HB 19 is critical to providing students across the State of Maryland with options for safe pedestrian and bicycle routes to school. Currently, there is no requirement to plan for pedestrian infrastructure as a condition of State funding approval. The process of comprehensively considering pedestrian safety and infrastructure needs is often delayed, and the construction plans for schools are not adequate in their approach to integrating infrastructure that provides seamless routes for students who are within walking boundaries. This bill is important given our County and Statewide efforts to reduce roadway deaths to zero ("Vision Zero"). I urge you as lawmakers to help contribute to this goal, by putting in place laws that will enable safe transportation options for all of Montgomery County's 1m+ residents - particularly those who are most vulnerable to traffic injuries or death, including (and especially) school-aged children.

**The Problem:** When School Systems and Transportation agencies plan for roadway infrastructure around newly constructed or renovated schools, this planning often happens too late and in a manner that is out of synch with the jurisdiction's capital improvement projects. This can result in beautiful new school facilities with poor transportation and traffic flow throughout boundary areas; and, desperately lacking safe pedestrian and bicycle access.

**To improve safety for our school-aged children, State-wide funding approval processes should include measures that require School systems and other agencies to collaborate with communities to fully assess the volume and impact on pedestrian and bicycle trips, and the associated infrastructure needs around new and significantly renovated schools. All students within walking boundaries of schools should be able to safely walk to school, especially if the school is new. A new school without a safe walking and biking route for students is a missed opportunity - especially if the lack of a safe route is due to poor planning and mismanagement.**

**HB 19 would provide for reasonable mitigation of the problem.** The Bill would require School Systems to integrate pedestrian and bicycle safety planning early in the funding approval process for certain State-funded new school construction or significant renovations, and would require School systems to work with the community and other agencies to produce a comprehensive Pedestrian Safety Plan, including identification of infrastructure needs.

**I am testifying in support of HB 19, because it would:**

- Improve safety and pedestrian access for students at new or newly renovated schools across the State of Maryland, allowing the option for more students to walk or bike to school.
- Ensure community engagement on factors beyond the strict “4-walls” definition of the school facility itself. The pedestrian facilities and streets on and around school property provide important connections across the community, supporting and embracing the “Complete Neighborhood” concept, allowing walkability to key institutions and services (e.g., schools).
- Improve cross-jurisdictional coordination, including holistic planning and integration of capacity and infrastructure needs on both State and local roadways within school zones.
- Encourage improved stewardship of taxpayer dollars, by requiring thoughtful assessment of nearby infrastructure. The actions identified during this early planning and approval process would ensure that capital improvement projects are accounted for (and then executed) in the most efficient manner.

Thank you for your time and attention to this Bill. I urge you to consider supporting HB 19, to help improve safety for children and communities around all State-funded new and newly renovated schools across the State of Maryland.

# **HB19\_IndivisibleHoCoMD\_FAV\_RuthAuerbach.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ruth Auerbach

Position: FAV



## **HB19 – Education - School Construction - Pedestrian Safety Plans (Safe Walk to School Act)**

**Testimony before**

**Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**

**April 5, 2022**

**Position: Favorable**

Dear Finance Committee Members,

My name is Ruth Auerbach, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today to **support HB19**, to require pedestrian and cycling safety plans for new schools and to coincide with certain renovations of existing schools. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are grateful for the leadership of Delegate Solomon for sponsoring this bill.

We enthusiastically support requirements for pedestrian and cycling plans for schools. According to a study by The National Center for Safe Routes to School, in 1969, 48% of children 5 to 14 years walked or bicycled to school, while in 2009, only 13% did. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention has further found that, "Active school transport, such as walking or biking, increases physical activity levels, which has health and academic benefits for children."<sup>1</sup> Reducing automobile trips will also be beneficial for the environment. I personally have frequently found myself caught in traffic jams in front of elementary schools in Howard County. An increase in walking and cycling would alleviate this problem.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report on this bill.**

Ruth Auerbach  
Columbia, MD 21046

---

<sup>1</sup> Everett Jones S, Sliwa S. School Factors Associated With the Percentage of Students Who Walk or Bike to School, School Health Policies and Practices Study, 2014. Prev Chronic Dis 2016;13:150573.

DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd13.150573>.

# **1 - X - HB 19 - EHEA - Health & Wellness - LOSAA.p**

Uploaded by: State of Maryland (MD)

Position: FAV

# MARYLAND STATE ADVISORY COUNCIL ON HEALTH AND WELLNESS

## MEMBERS

Jessica Kiel, R.D., Chair  
Salliann Alborn  
Mary Backley  
Sumit Bassi, M.D.  
Crystal Bell, M.P.A.  
E. Felicia Brannon, M.P.A.  
Mary Pat Raimondi Bertacchi, R.D.  
Jonathan Dayton, I.A.A.I-F.I.T,  
N.R.E.M.T.  
Jennifer Eastman, M.B.A.  
Mychelle Farmer, M.D.  
Lois Freeman, D.N.P.  
Gary Gerstenblith, M.D.  
Roger Harrell, M.H.A.  
Namisa Kramer, M.S.  
Julie Maneen, M.S.  
Seth Martin, M.D.  
Aruna Nathan, M.D.  
Rachel Pigott, O.T.R./L, M.P.H.  
Cameron Pollock, M.P.H.  
Erika Prolifi, M.S., C.P.T.  
Vaple Robinson, Ph.D.  
Vivienne Rose, M.D.  
Jason Semanoff, M.S.  
Geeta Sharma, M.P.T.  
Afton Thomas, M.D.  
Teresa Titus-Howard, PhD.  
Sara Vazer, M.D.  
Kristin Watson, PharmD.  
Pamela Williams, M.H.A.  
Vanina Wolf, L.Ac.  
Pamela Xenakis, R.D.

April 5, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky  
Chair, Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD, 21401

## **RE: HB 19 (3rd) - Education - School Construction - Pedestrian Safety Plans (Safe Walk to School Act) - Letter of Support as Amended**

Dear Chair Pinsky and Committee Members:

The Maryland State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness (the Council) submits this letter of support for House Bill (HB) 19 (3rd) Education- School Construction – Pedestrian Safety Plans (Safe Walk to School Act) as amended.

The purpose of HB 19 (3rd) is requiring certain county boards of education seeking State funds for the construction of a new school, or the renovation of or an addition to an existing school that would increase the capacity by more than a certain number of students, to submit a pedestrian safety plan to the Interagency Commission on School Construction; requiring the Interagency Commission to approve the pedestrian safety plans if they meet certain requirements; and generally relating to pedestrian safety plans for schools.

The Council supports HB 19 (3rd) as an effective intervention to improve safety and encourage physical activity among Maryland students by requiring a comprehensive pedestrian safety plan for newly constructed or expanded public schools. The comprehensive plans are intended to evaluate existing and potential infrastructure and school zone areas to facilitate safe walking and biking routes to school.

Regular physical activity can improve cardiovascular, muscular and bone health and reduces the risk for chronic disease like hypertension, diabetes, obesity and heart disease. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommends that young people aged 6-17 years participate in at least 60 minutes of physical activity daily, however just one in 5 Maryland children meet that recommendation.<sup>1,2</sup>

Physical activity is also a key factor in helping children achieve and maintain a healthy weight. Nearly 17% of Maryland 10-17 year olds are obese, placing them at higher risk for cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and breathing problems.<sup>3,4</sup>

Safe Routes to School is an evidence-based, CDC-recommended strategy to increase child physical activity and thereby combat childhood obesity and chronic disease

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans, 2nd edition. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; 2018.

<sup>2</sup> National Survey of Children's Health (2020). <https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey/results?q=8538&r=22>; retrieved 7 January 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2020). State of Childhood Obesity: Maryland. <https://stateofchildhoodobesity.org/states/md/>; retrieved 7 January 2022.

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2021). Childhood Obesity Causes and Consequences. <https://www.cdc.gov/obesity/childhood/causes.html#:~:text=Children%20who%20have%20obesity%20are%20more%20likely%20to%20have%3A&text=High%20blood%20pressure%20and%20high.as%20asthma%20and%20sleep%20apnea>; retrieved 7 January 2022.

risk. Safe Routes to School works with partners in the community, including planning, engineering, transportation and education partners, to address the built environment and ensure safe conditions for walking and biking.<sup>5</sup> One three-year study found that Safe Routes to School programs doubled the percentage of children who walked and biked to school.<sup>6</sup>

Community-wide approaches to population health are necessary to improve and sustain health outcomes, as they shape the environments where we live, learn, work, and play. Community interventions, such as the pedestrian safety plans proposed in HB 19 (3rd), have the greatest potential impact on our health.<sup>7</sup> Improving the conditions for walking and biking to school can benefit the entire community by increasing physical activity and reducing injuries from car and pedestrian collisions.<sup>8,9</sup>

Safe walking and biking routes are beneficial to all schools, not just those in cities of 10,000 residents that add 100 or more students, as HB 19 (3rd) specifies. Children in rural areas tend to be less physically active than those in urban areas, and rural areas frequently lack safe opportunities for young people to engage in physical activity.<sup>10</sup> Schools and students in cities or towns that do not reach the 10,000 resident threshold could benefit substantially from the pedestrian safety plans required by HB 19 (3rd). The Council asks for consideration to amend the bill to include schools in less populated areas.

The Council respectfully urges this Committee to approve HB 19 (3rd), with the expansion to all new school construction and expansion, as an important public health measure to keep Maryland's children safe and healthy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Jessica Kiel". The signature is written in black ink on a white background.

Jessica Kiel, M.S., R.D., Chair, State Advisory Council on Health and Wellness

---

<sup>5</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). Safe Routes to School. <https://www.cdc.gov/policy/hst/hi5/saferoutes/index.html>, retrieved 7 January 2022.

<sup>6</sup> National Center for Safe Routes to School. Shifting modes: a comparative analysis of Safe Routes to School Program elements and travel mode outcome. In: U.S. Department of Transportation FHA, ed. [saferoutesinfo.org](http://saferoutesinfo.org): National Center for Safe Routes to School; 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (2018). The Health Impact in 5 Years (HI-5) Initiative. <https://www.cdc.gov/policy/hst/hi5/index.html>; retrieved 7 January 2022.

<sup>8</sup> Watson, M. and Dannenberg, A. (2008). *Investment in Safe Routes to School Projects: Public Health Benefits for the Larger Community*, *Preventing Chronic Disease* 5(3): A90. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2483559/>.

<sup>9</sup> DiMaggio, C. and Li, G. (2013). *Effectiveness of a Safe Routes to School Program in Preventing School-Aged Pedestrian Injury*, *Pediatrics* 131(2): 290–296. <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3557410/>.

<sup>10</sup> Safe Routes to School National Partnership (2016). *Safe Routes to School in Small Rural Communities: Challenges and Strategies to Accessing Funding*. [https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource\\_files/srts\\_brief\\_ruralcomm\\_final.pdf](https://www.saferoutespartnership.org/sites/default/files/resource_files/srts_brief_ruralcomm_final.pdf).

# **HB19 Education - School Construction - Pedestrian**

Uploaded by: Dawana Sterrette

Position: UNF

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Johnette A. Richardson**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
Chief Executive Officer

**Testimony of the  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
In Opposition of  
House Bill 19  
Education – School Construction -Pedestrians Safety Plans  
(Safe Walk to School Act)**

**April 5, 2022**

The Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners understands the concerns that the sponsor brings forth in this bill. However, this bill, even amended, is costly and challenging for a high density urban area, such as Baltimore City.

If a pedestrian safety plans are added as part of an architect/engineer's formal submission package, the cost would easily increase depending on the size of the property and the surrounding school zone since the work may encompass sidewalks, drainage, ADA access, signage, trees, and possibly lighting. This then requires professional engagement and other services which would include a civil engineer, landscape architect, architect, safety inspector; the internal engagement and enrollment teams; other external partners like DOT, Planning, and others.

One of the district's most significant challenges with the bill is that it is asking for non-school property spaces to be evaluated and potentially improved. Sidewalks beyond our sites and roads are typically not within the allowable fund expenditures because they are not school property. This means many other public agencies (DOT, Dept of Planning, DPW, etc.) would have to be involved, and the bill doesn't specify how those entities would have to partner with the school district to construct a cohesive plan.

In addition, because school designers typically do not have traffic study experience, other consultants would have to be engaged. This could increase the design fees, which could increase exponentially based on the size of the site. We estimate this to be in the order of \$40,000 for an average site in the City. This would create a significant civil engineering component to the projects. Considering the public hearing requirement, there is a cost implication there as well.

Finally, City Schools questions the ability for a high density urban area to even be able to do the items indicated. The current "Safe Routes to School Program" being managed by Inspire in Baltimore City focuses on improving the neighborhood within a quarter mile of the school, to create a safe route for students (not passing abandoned houses, dangerous situations, etc.). The legislation discusses sidewalk infrastructure, for example. While, perhaps, some of the

# BALTIMORE CITY PUBLIC SCHOOLS

**Brandon M. Scott**  
Mayor, City of Baltimore

**Jhnette A. Richardson**  
Chair, Baltimore City Board  
of School Commissioners

**Dr. Sonja Brookins Santelises**  
Chief Executive Officer

sidewalks may need repair, in our urban area, many of the sidewalks go from property line to curb line. There is no way to expand that infrastructure.

For the foregoing reasons, the Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners urges an unfavorable report

Dawana Merritt Sterrette, Esq.  
Director, Legislative and Government Affairs  
dsterrette@bcps.k12.md.us  
Baltimore City Board of School Commissioners  
443-250-0190

Melissa Broome  
Director, Policy and Legislative Affairs  
Mcbroome@bcps.k12.md.us  
Baltimore City Public School System  
443-525-3038

# **Testimony of Elise Saltzberg on HB 1343 - UNFAVORA**

Uploaded by: Elise Saltzberg

Position: UNF



**To: Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee**  
**Against: HB 1343 Major State Contractors – Donations to Advocacy Organizations --**  
**Disclosure**

**Date: April 4, 2022**

**Testimony of: Elise Saltzberg, Saltzberg Consulting**

**Contact information: 410-486-3603 (office) 410-236-0758 (cell) [elise@saltzbergconsulting.com](mailto:elise@saltzbergconsulting.com)**

My name is Elise Saltzberg and I have been a Resource Development Consultant to nonprofit organizations in Maryland since 2000. I am presenting testimony not in favor of HB 1343, which would require nonprofits such as my clients to report donations “made by a major state contractor...to an advocacy organization that makes disbursements for public communications relating to a major state project in which the major state contractor has a financial interest.”

This bill lacks clarity regarding several important provisions, and it may deter nonprofits from conducting advocacy with public communications on policy issues where the outcome might generate procurement contracts – even if it isn’t lobbying on legislation. Several critical terms in the bill, such as *donation* and *disbursement* and *relating to* aren’t defined. Furthermore, it is unclear whether “disbursements” include payments for the nonprofits’ internal costs for generating public communications or if they only relate to payments to external contractors such as public relations firms.

Many nonprofit organizations are “Nervous Nellies” when it comes to any form of lobbying or advocacy – even when it is clearly germane to their missions and in the best interests of their constituencies. Although it is perfectly legal for nonprofits to lobby within certain limits, if HB 1343 becomes law, it is likely to make nonprofit boards, staff, and donors even more nervous and cause their organizations to shy away from advocacy. I urge you to VOTE NO on HB 1343.

Thank you for the opportunity to present this testimony.

# **HB 19.Pedestrian Plans Mandate - SENATE.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: UNF

**BILL:** House Bill 19  
**TITLE:** Education – School Construction – Pedestrian Safety Plans  
(Safe Walk to School Act)  
**DATE:** April 5, 2022  
**POSITION:** OPPOSE  
**COMMITTEE:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**CONTACT:** John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes House Bill 19.

Local school systems are opposed to mandating, as proposed by this bill, that local school systems seeking State funds for the construction of a new public school or, for the renovation or addition to an existing school, submit a pedestrian safety plan to the Interagency Commission on School Construction (IAC). Pedestrian safety plans must be developed through extensive public engagement and in collaboration with the State Highway Administration (SHA) and county departments of transportation. The IAC then must review and approve these submitted pedestrian safety plans in consultation with the SHA.

While MABE appreciates the intent of the bill regarding ensuring attention to pedestrian safety as it relates to school facilities, this bill would impose an enormous burden on school personnel to study and recommend public works projects completely outside the purview or funding authority of the school system.

MABE recognizes the need for safe and effective walking routes to local schools and appreciates the intent behind this bill. However, this bill requires that non-school property be evaluated and potentially improved based on the plan's findings, which are not allowable fund expenditures because they are not school property. Additionally, any identified gaps would be outside the school system's ability to remedy given that they are not located on school property. Consequently, other state and local agencies would necessarily be involved in leading or partnering with local school systems on projects called for in pedestrian safety plans.

Local government departments of public works and transportation, working independently or conjunction with local school systems, may certainly produce and fund pedestrian safety plan studies similar to those included in this bill. Most importantly, they are also funding authorities with the capacity to levy taxes and issue bonds to support and include the projects identified in plans in their annual budgets.

Lastly, MABE is concerned that the bill relies on an arbitrary distinction between high- and low-density counties. Within the high-density counties identified in the bill are many rural schools, and within largely rural jurisdictions there are many schools located within municipalities and other high-density areas for which pedestrian safety plans may be very appropriate. Again, the bill addresses a serious student safety policy area, but one that MABE firmly believes should remain in the context of local intergovernmental cooperation and coordination of planning and the investment of available local, state, and federal funding.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on House Bill 19.