

1.31.23 SB 16 Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act

Uploaded by: Bee Ditzler

Position: FAV



SB 16 Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

POSITION: Support

BY: Nancy Soreng, LWVMD President

Date: January 31, 2023

The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) agrees that SB 16 should be made law to create another tool our state uses to make all of us safer. LWVMD's positions encourage individuals to conserve natural resources and reduce energy consumption. In addition, we support incentives which promote use of mass transit and other alternative modes of travel. If the use of bicycles and modes of travel that involve pedestrians aren't safe, that is hardly an incentive. No one wants fatalities to occur. Guidelines that are transparent and readily available for everyone to see can help make us all safer while traveling, regardless of the destination or recreational use. Maryland should help promote mobility safety and a good way to do this is by monitoring and rectifying problems for pedestrians and bicyclists.

One remedy doesn't fit every situation. By evaluating each unique project, then designing the best way to make pedestrians and bicyclists safer, we may actually save taxpayer dollars. Having a set procedure and guidelines that are used when a project is first proposed without redesigning and redoing a project is wise spending. Using funds wisely in support of Vision Zero and safety guidelines with the government benefits everyone.

By evaluating all roads for safety first, a pattern can be more easily followed and modified for each situation to help provide a safe environment. Both individuals and agencies are well intentioned in promoting safety, but may not have knowledge of or reviewed all the situations that make a specific location unique.

SB 16 provides a way to examine gaps in existing infrastructure and helps to make it safer for users whether it is a shared-use path, sidewalk, bike lane, or road. The public deserves a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

LWVMD urges a favorable report on SB 16.

SB16_MDSierraClub_fav 31Jan2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Brian Ditzler

Position: FAV



P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Judicial Proceedings
Testimony on: SB 16 – “Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023”
Position: Support
Hearing Date: January 31, 2023

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club strongly supports SB 16, which would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to recommend and implement context-driven design elements to increase pedestrian and bicycle safety when developing any construction or improvement project. When a new construction or improvement project would take more than 12 months to complete, all possible near-term safety improvements must be made.

The State Highway Administration (SHA) would also be required to submit to the General Assembly before October 1, 2023, a report with information about employees who work on pedestrian and bicycle safety that includes turnover rates and the number of open staff positions. The report also should provide the number of signalized crosswalks that have been approved for construction and the timeline for completion. The bill also would require SHA to submit to the General Assembly on or before December 1, 2023, a full analysis of state highways that pass through suburban activity centers or traditional town centers, and a timeline for installing safe pedestrian signalized crossings on all state highways where there is significant transit dependency and a population density along the highway exceeding 10,000 people per mile.

We live in a car-centric culture where transportation planning, road design and vehicle laws are focused on getting cars and trucks to their destinations as swiftly as possible. With more and heavier SUVs on the road than ever before, this has resulted in high rates of injury and death for pedestrians and bicyclists. The correlation between speed, road design and crash severity is well documented. Combining excessive speed with poor roadway and intersection designs can yield horrifying results. According to the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration’s Highway Safety Office, there were 544 traffic fatalities in our state in 2022, including 139 pedestrian and bicycle deaths.

Not everyone is able to drive, for reasons including age, health, and finances. Roadway design must be updated to prioritize safety for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as drivers. The state transportation system needs to ensure that everyone has a safe way to get to their job, education, and housing. One important measure to take is installation of more crosswalks on state highways in high population areas.

Transportation is now the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in our state. Tailpipe emissions are also a major source of health-damaging air pollution. There is a growing need to get individuals out of their cars, to take transit, ride bikes and scooters, and walk more. These modes significantly reduce air pollution and can increase physical health.

In summary, the high number of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities that continue to occur on our roadways is unacceptable and indicates new measures must be undertaken to dramatically lessen and ideally eliminate all traffic deaths. SB 16 would help make that happen. We urge a favorable report on this bill.

Brian Ditzler
Chapter Transportation Chair
Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

testimony2023sb16.pdf

Uploaded by: Franz Schneiderman

Position: FAV



Testimony to the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
SB 16 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023 –
Position: Favorable

The Honorable Will Smith
Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401
cc: Members, Judicial Proceedings Committee

Jan. 31, 2023

Dear Chairman Smith and Committee Members,

I'm a consumer advocate and Executive Director of Consumer Auto, a non-profit group that works to foster safety, transparency, and fair treatment for Maryland drivers and car buyers.

We support **SB 16** because it will improve safety for all Maryland road users – and especially of the highly vulnerable pedestrians and cyclists who account for more than 20% of the fatalities on Maryland's roads.

The measures the bill mandates will help address the dramatic spike in road deaths we've seen on U.S. roads in recent years. In 2020, overall U.S. road deaths increased 7.2% to more than 38,000 – and 6,721 pedestrians were among those killed (up 4.8% from the previous year).¹ For 2021, the news was even worse – with traffic fatalities rising another 10.5% and almost 43,000 Americans dying on U.S. roads. NHTSA estimates that 7,342 pedestrians were among those killed in 2021, up 5% from the year before to a 40-year high.²

Sadly, those figures only intensify trends that have been clear for many years. While roads in other wealthy nations have gotten much safer in recent decades (traffic fatalities in the E.U. fell a remarkable 36% between 2010 and 2018, for instance³), fatalities have been trending upward on U.S. roads for several decades. For pedestrians, total fatalities rose about 45% between 2010 (4,302 deaths) and 2019 (6,237 deaths).⁴ From 2010 to 2021, the number of cyclists dying each year soared 58%, with an estimated 8,353 cyclists losing their lives over that period.⁵

Road deaths in Maryland haven't seen quite so dramatic a spike. But between 125 and 138 pedestrians died in our state each year 2019-2021.⁶ Preliminary data for 2022 show that 544 people died on Maryland roads last year, with 128 pedestrians and 11 cyclists among those killed.⁷

1 <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-01-27/usdot-s-buttigieg-announces-new-traffic-safety-strategy>

3. <https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/traffic-pedestrian-deaths-soar-2021/623913/>

4. <https://cleantechnica.com/2021/12/11/eu-road-deaths-dropped-by-36-while-us-road-deaths-increased-by-10/>

4 <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

6. <https://www.cyclingweekly.com/news/us-cycling-fatalities-hit-multi-decade-high-but-there-may-be-hope-in-safety-in-numbers-effect>

6 <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/#>

7. <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>



We know a great deal about who is likely to be killed in these crashes and where they happen. Across the county, people walking in lower-income neighborhoods are more likely to be killed, with those in the lowest-income neighborhoods almost twice as likely to die as those in middle-income Census tracts.⁸ Death rates are also unusually high among older Americans, African-Americans, and Native Americans.⁹

Data from the Governor's Highway Safety Association (GHSA) show that 73% of pedestrian deaths happen on principal, minor or interstate arterials – that is, high-speed, high-capacity roads in urbanized areas where crosswalks are often a long distance apart.¹⁰ More than two-thirds of pedestrian deaths happen on roads without protected space for people on foot or in wheelchairs.¹¹

While many factors help make our roads dangerous, safety advocates know that such data carries an important lesson: that the core of the problem is that we have too many dangerous, high-speed roads in urban and suburban spaces that offer too little protection for pedestrians and other vulnerable road users. To improve safety, we need to act with urgency to redesign our streetscapes (esp. in town centers and high-density areas) in ways we know can provide greater protection.

SB 16 takes several important steps to make that happen. It mandates, among other measures, that MDOT and the State Highway Administration implement context-appropriate design changes as they undertake construction and maintenance projects; it requires SHA to act this year to examine the safety of state highways in town centers and offer a plan to install safe pedestrian crossings; it also requires SHA to report promptly on the impact of its open positions on safety efforts and on the number of new signalized crossings approved.

These and other measures the bill mandates promise to make a real difference in the safety of some of our most vulnerable residents and road users. And while some drivers may complain about those changes, re-engineering dangerous intersections and corridors with an eye to protecting their most vulnerable users will in the end tend to lower speeds and alter road designs in ways that will make drivers significantly safer as well.

We support SB 16 and ask you to give it a FAVORABLE report.

Sincerely,

Franz Schneiderman
Consumer Auto

8 <https://smartgrowthamerica.org/dangerous-by-design/>

9 Ibid.

10.. <https://ggwash.org/view/85217/why-pedestrian-deaths-in-the-us-hit-a-record-high-in-2021>

11. Ibid.

Takoma Park 2023 - SB 16 FAV - SAFE Roads - Senate

Uploaded by: Jamal Fox

Position: FAV



**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK,
MARYLAND**

**SB 16
Support**

Judicial Proceedings Committee - January 31, 2023

SB 16: SAFE Roads Act of 2023

City Council of the City of Takoma Park

The City of Takoma Park supports the goals and intent of Senate Bill 16, and urges favorable consideration.

A great deal needs to be done to shift how we look at pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The SAFE Roads Act would provide one way to shift the car-focused paradigm that now dictates how we approach our communities to one that promotes biking, walking, and most importantly, residents' lives.

We should be doing all we can to prevent roadway fatalities, and this bill will put in place procedures that are long overdue to provide the data and funding to increase roadway safety. The City of Takoma Park strongly endorses this bill as a municipality with many State Highway Administration (SHA) roadways, and first-hand experience with how long it can take to have assessments and engineering countermeasures proposed and then actually implemented. We also have experience going through the long design process only to be told a project is not funded and no changes, even incremental improvements, will be made to make the roadways safer.

We thank the individual SHA traffic engineers we have worked with in the City. Unfortunately, many of the barriers to addressing roadway safety are built into how SHA is structured and conducts its work. The SAFE Roads Act begins to address some of the current dysfunction.

In sum, the City of Takoma Park supports the goals and intent of this bill, and encourages a favorable vote.

Bike MD 2023 SB 16– Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roa

Uploaded by: Jarryd Hawkins

Position: FAV



SB 16 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

Senate Finance Committee

January 31, 2023

Josh Feldmark

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.

Last year I testified to this committee in favor of the SAFE Roads Act and the Vision Zero Implementation Act. In that testimony I borrowed the words from the testimony of Kim Lamphier when she testified in front of the Finance Committee on the original passage of Vision Zero in 2019.

Let me quickly repeat Kim’s words: The concept of vision zero is to shift our first priority from getting motor vehicles to their destination as fast as possible to making sure everyone gets to their destination safely. Vision Zero recognizes that all traffic fatalities are preventable even though human decision making will always be fallible. It relies on infrastructure, engineering, and policies to prevent fatalities. Vision Zero examines factors that are essential for safe mobility—including roadway design, speeds, enforcement, user behavior, technology, and policies.

I mention all of this because this bill represents an equally important next step in the implementation of Vision Zero. To put it succinctly, this legislation is just good policy. It is what should be happening anyway, what things would look like if Maryland was truly committed to the safety of all its road users and to improving access to all. Specifically:

- Requiring context driven design elements for bicycles and pedestrians in all projects. Context driven design is precisely as it sounds, and is critical that the context of individual locations is studied so that the design elements will in fact, increase access and improve safety
- Incentivize near-term incremental improvements so that the most dangerous intersections may see improvements before large scale capital improvements can be made.
- A comprehensive analysis of state highways to discover commonalities among dangerous intersections and stretches of road as well as the improvements that can fix these problems
- Finally, transparency on the staffing commitment to the above goals.

Bike Maryland fully supports SB 16 and urges a favorable report.

MDOT SHA - SB16 - Proposed Amendments.pdf

Uploaded by: Jeff Waldstreicher

Position: FAV

HB 70/SB 16 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023
MDOT SHA Proposed Amendments

2-103.1. 17

(C-1) (1) THE DEPARTMENT, IN DEVELOPING ~~ANY CONSTRUCTION OR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT, OR POSTCONSTRUCTION PROJECT, PRESERVATION, OR MAINTENANCE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE CAPITAL PROGRAM~~, SHALL RECOMMEND AND IMPLEMENT CONTEXT-DRIVEN DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY CONSISTENT WITH:

(i) THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION PROVEN SAFETY COUNTERMEASURES; AND

(ii) THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S CONTEXT DRIVEN GUIDE AND ASSOCIATED STRATEGIES.

(2) IF A NEW CONSTRUCTION OR IMPROVEMENT PROJECT IS PROJECTED TO TAKE MORE THAN 12 MONTHS TO COMPLETE, THE DEPARTMENT SHALL IMPLEMENT ALL POSSIBLE INCREMENTAL, NEAR-TERM SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS IMMEDIATELY WHILE MAINTAINING EACH PROJECT'S PRIORITY RANKING.

2-609.

(A) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2023, THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION SHALL SUBMIT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, A REPORT THAT INCLUDES:

(1) THE NUMBER OF ~~OPEN~~-STAFF POSITIONS ~~IN~~-THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION ~~HAS DEDIDACTED TO IMPLEMENTING PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS~~ BY TITLE AND DEPARTMENT ~~AND THE EXTENT TO WHICH THESE OPEN POSITIONS SLOW DOWN THE PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS ONCE NEEDED IMPROVEMENTS HAVE BEEN IDENTIFIED~~;

(2) INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYEES ~~WHO PERFORM DIRECT LABOR ON~~~~DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING~~ PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE HIGHWAY SAFETY AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FOR THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

(I) WAGE, BENEFIT, AND COMPENSATION LEVELS;

(II) ~~OPEN POSITIONS BY~~ TITLE AND DEPARTMENT;

~~(III) TURNOVER RATES; AND~~

~~(IV) AN EXAMINATION OF HOW TURNOVER RATES AND OPEN POSITIONS AFFECT HOW QUICKLY SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS CAN BE IMPLEMENTED; AND~~

(3) THE NUMBER OF NEW SIGNALIZED CROSSWALKS THAT HAVE BEEN APPROVED FOR CONSTRUCTION, THE TIMEFRAME FOR COMPLETION, AND THE CAUSE OF ANY DELAYS IN DEPLOYMENT FOR:

(I) FULLY SIGNALIZED CROSSWALKS;

(II) PEDESTRIAN HYBRID BEACONS; AND

(III) ANY OTHER SIGNAL TYPES.

(B) ON OR BEFORE ~~DECEMBER 1, 2023~~ OCTOBER 1, 2024, THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION SHALL SUBMIT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, A REPORT WITH A FULL ANALYSIS OF AND PLAN FOR ALL STATE HIGHWAYS LOCATED IN SUBURBAN ACTIVITY CENTERS OR TRADITIONAL TOWN CENTERS, AS DEFINED BY THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S CONTEXT ZONES GUIDE, THAT:

(1) INCLUDES AN INSTALLATION PLAN AND TIMELINE REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS ON THESE STATE HIGHWAYS;

(2) USES ALL SIGNAL TYPES IN THE PLANNING OF ROAD CROSSINGS, INCLUDING FULL SIGNALS, PEDESTRIAN HYBRID BEACONS, AND ANY OTHER SIGNALS; AND

(3) ~~PLACES~~ EVALUATES THE PLACING OF PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS ~~AT A MINIMUM OF ONE FIFTH MILE IN~~ BEST DETERMINED BY A DATA DRIVEN APPROACH THAT CONSIDERS CONTEXT DRIVEN DESIGN CONCEPTS AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO CENSUS TRACTS WITH SIGNIFICANT TRANSIT DEPENDENCY AND A POPULATION DENSITY ALONG THE HIGHWAY THAT EXCEEDS 10,000 PEOPLE PER MILE.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That it is the intent of the General Assembly that the Maryland Department of Transportation maximize applications for and access to federal funding that is or may become available for infrastructure for pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Senator Waldstreicher Testimony - SB 16 - SAFE Roa

Uploaded by: Jeff Waldstreicher

Position: FAV

SENATOR JEFF WALDSTREICHER
Legislative District 18
Montgomery County

—
Vice Chair
Judicial Proceedings Committee

—
Joint Committee on Federal Relations



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The Senate of Maryland
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Jeff Waldstreicher
Senate Bill 16 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

January 31, 2023

Chairman Smith & Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee:

Every year, hundreds of pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers tragically lose their lives here in Maryland. Despite the modest decrease in roadway fatalities in recent years, Maryland still sees an unacceptable number of crashes—519 in 2021—resulting in 557 fatalities, including 129 pedestrians and six bicyclists.¹

These deaths were 100% preventable. As you know, during the 2019 legislative session, the General Assembly passed legislation committing to the Vision Zero goal of zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries on our roadways. Senate Bill 16, Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023, would help make that goal a reality.

Simply put, SB 16 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to place emphasis on pedestrian and bicycle safety in the development and construction of any roadway project. It would also require the State Highway Administration (SHA) to provide reports to the General Assembly detailing the agency's efforts to make our roadways safer for pedestrians and bicyclists.

No Marylander should have to risk their lives by choosing to walk or bike on our roadways. This timely legislation would ensure that they won't have to. For the foregoing reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB 16.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jeff Waldstreicher". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Senator Jeff Waldstreicher

¹ Maryland Department of Transportation. (2022, April 18). *557 Fatalities on Maryland Highways in 2021* [Press Release] <https://www.mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/newsroomdetails.aspx?newsId=610>

BikeAAASupportSB16SafeRoads-2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Jon Korin

Position: FAV



Support SB16 Safe Roads for All

Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County
P.O. Box 208, Arnold, MD 21012 www.bikeaaa.org

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

January 30, 2023

RE: SUPPORT Senate Bill 16

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of District 30, president of Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (“BikeAAA”), Chair of the Anne Arundel County Bicycle Advisory Commission, and former Member of the 2017 Maryland Bicycle Safety Task Force. On behalf of BikeAAA and its more than 1,000 members, we support HB656. Fatalities and injuries continue to rise from crashes involving vulnerable road users including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorcyclists, people with disabilities and first responders. Maryland must assure that its adoption of Vision Zero is not just a slogan but that we are taking concrete actions to reduce the number of crashes and the severity of injury when they happen. Maryland’s commitment to Complete Streets and Vision Zero call for adjustments to road design that provide accommodations and safety safer for all users, especially our most vulnerable who are not in motor vehicles. A disproportionate number of crashes resulting in death and injury occur on state roadways and Maryland SHA must lead in reversing this deadly trend. A shift in mode from single occupancy vehicles to walking, biking and other forms of micromobility is the best way to relieve congestion, protect our environment, improve health, strengthen our economy and provide equitable travel options. This legislation assures implementation of Maryland’s adoption of Vision Zero in 2019 and Complete Streets in 2018.

Please support SB16 to make Maryland’s roads safe for all users, especially our most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

Jon Korin
President, Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County
Tel: 443-685-4103

SB16_Jan31_Senate_Daphnis_SAFE_RoadsforAll.pdf

Uploaded by: Kristy Daphnis

Position: FAV



(SB0016), Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023
WRITTEN TESTIMONY - January 30, 2023

Testimony Delivered by:

**Kristy Daphnis, Montgomery County Resident
Montgomery County Families for Safe Streets Co-Founder &
Executive Steering Committee Member**

Bill Position: Support

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today, in support of SB 16. SB16 is a bill that will require the Department of Transportation to recommend and implement certain design elements for pedestrian and bicycle safety when developing certain projects; will require the State Highway Administration to submit certain reports including pedestrian and bicycle safety data, analyses, and plans to the General Assembly by certain dates; and other requirements generally relating to pedestrian and bicycle safety.

While the State of Maryland and several jurisdictions have committed to Vision Zero, we have not made significant progress toward implementation in a manner that prevents deaths. In certain instances, there are intersections and corridors where pedestrians and cyclists are killed, again and again, yet the infrastructure has not changed, and meaningful discussion and action around how to make the roadway safe for all are stalled or non-existent.

A few important features of SB16 include:

1. Implementation of context-driven design elements along State Highways, including counter measures that have been proven at the Federal level.
2. Short-term interventions to improve safety, even if the ideal solution will take many years.
3. Addressing State-agency workforce issues, by helping to ensure the SHA can recruit and hire professionals necessary to carry out the work.
4. Reporting on existing conditions, especially in dense residential and urban areas and related to signals and crosswalks – and, further, requiring a safe crossing every 1/5 mile in areas and corridors that are heavily dependent on transit.

I began to get involved in pedestrian and traffic safety issues after my child's care provider, Etsegenet Hurissa, was killed while she was crossing Georgia Avenue on the way home from her evening nursing class. She was crossing at an unmarked crosswalk near a bus stop, and was struck by a speeding driver. To get to a signalized crosswalk, she would have needed to walk a full mile out of her way – as the nearest signal was 0.5 miles away. While I am grateful that there was a signal installed nearby, and the speed limit was reduced – installation of that signal took nearly 6 years, and an additional death. Had there been a signals and safe crosswalks at 1/5 mile intervals before her death Etsegenet may still be alive today.

As a Leader of Montgomery County Families for Safe Streets, I work with my colleagues and victim's families to plan and carry out memorials for traffic crash victims across Montgomery County, of which we have planned dozens over the past 3 years. We see this situation time and time again - areas where there are no safe crossings, along transit dependent corridors dotted with bus stops, businesses, and highly dense residential areas. In some cases, we have returned to the same intersections or corridors 3, 4, 5, even 6 times. Passage and implementation of this Bill would lead to a more fulsome analysis and implementation of the State-issued Context Driven Design Guide, as well as a thoughtful process for installing safe crossings and other interventions.

I urge you to support SB16, to help improve roadway safety and to reduce gridlock and congestion across the State of Maryland. If passed and implemented, this Bill will certainly save lives.

Written Testimony for SB 16 (SAFE Roads Act).pdf

Uploaded by: Patrick Wojahn

Position: FAV



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Testimony in Support of SB 16, the Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

By Patrick Wojahn, Director of Government Relations, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy
Before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
January 31, 2023, 1:00 pm

Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC) is the nation's leading organization dedicated to connected trail networks and building healthy places for healthy people. With 4,833 members across the State of Maryland, RTC advocates for development of trail and active transportation networks around the State including the Baltimore Greenway Trails Network and the Capital Trails Coalition Network.

RTC submits this testimony *in support of SB 16*, which would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to recommend and implement certain design elements for pedestrian and bicycle safety when developing certain projects, require the State Highway Administration to submit reports including pedestrian and bicycle safety data, analyses, and plans to the General Assembly, and other requirements.

While the State of Maryland has adopted the concept of Vision Zero, the state continues to fail to take critical steps toward achieving the goal of zero fatalities and injuries, particularly relating to vulnerable road users including pedestrians, bicyclists and people with disabilities. Better reporting and increased access to data relating to crashes and resulting injuries and fatalities will help enable all interested stakeholders to better understand the steps that need to be taken to reach this goal.

Incorporating and investing in best practices for design elements to increase the safety for pedestrians and bicyclists will help ensure that the number of transportation-related casualties for vulnerable users will decrease. As the nation's leading advocate for separated pedestrian and bicyclist infrastructure such as trails, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy recognizes that the best way to ensure bicyclists, pedestrians and people with disabilities reach their destination is to provide dedicated infrastructure away from automobiles such as trails. We encourage the General Assembly and MDOT, and the State Highway Administration in particular, to include investment in trail networks as a strategy toward ensuring safety for all vulnerable users.

Trails and active transportation networks can be a tool to provide greater access for all Marylanders to job or educational opportunities in a way that is safe and more affordable. The Non-motorized Transportation Pilot Program, which invested over \$100 million from the federal

budget to develop networks of non-motorized transportation infrastructure in four communities (Sheboygan County, Wisconsin, Marin County, California, Columbia, Missouri, and Minneapolis, Minnesota) demonstrated the potential impacts.¹ As a result of this investment, even with significant increases in the number of people walking and biking, bicycle and pedestrian crashes held steady or decreased in all the communities involved in the pilot.² The 2017 National Household Travel Survey found that 53% of all trips taken are within 3 miles or less, and 28% of all trips taken are within 1 mile or less.³ Many more people will take these trips by walking and biking if they have safe and accessible ways to do so.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this testimony. If you have questions, please contact Patrick Wojahn, Director of Government Relations, Rails-to-Trails Conservancy, at 240-988-7763

¹ https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/ntpp/

² Id.

³ U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, 2017 National Household Travel Survey Tables, March 2018, <https://nhts.ornl.gov/download.shtm>

SB16_fav_AARP.pdf

Uploaded by: PRISCILLA KANIA

Position: FAV



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facebook.com/aarpm

SB 16 Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

Support

January 31, 2023

Good afternoon Chairman Smith and members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee. I am Priscilla Kania, lead advocate for AARP Maryland and resident of Anne Arundel County. On behalf of our 850,000 members, we would like to thank you for the opportunity to speak in support of **SB 16 Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023**. We thank Senator Waldstreicher for introducing SB 16.

SB16 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), in developing any construction or improvement project, or postconstruction project, preservation, or maintenance, to recommend and implement specified design elements for pedestrian and bicycle safety. If a new project is projected to take more than 12 months to complete, MDOT must implement all possible incremental near-term safety improvements immediately, as specified. The bill also establishes reporting requirements for the State Highway Administration (SHA) that relate to pedestrian and bicycle safety. The bill takes effect June 1, 2023.

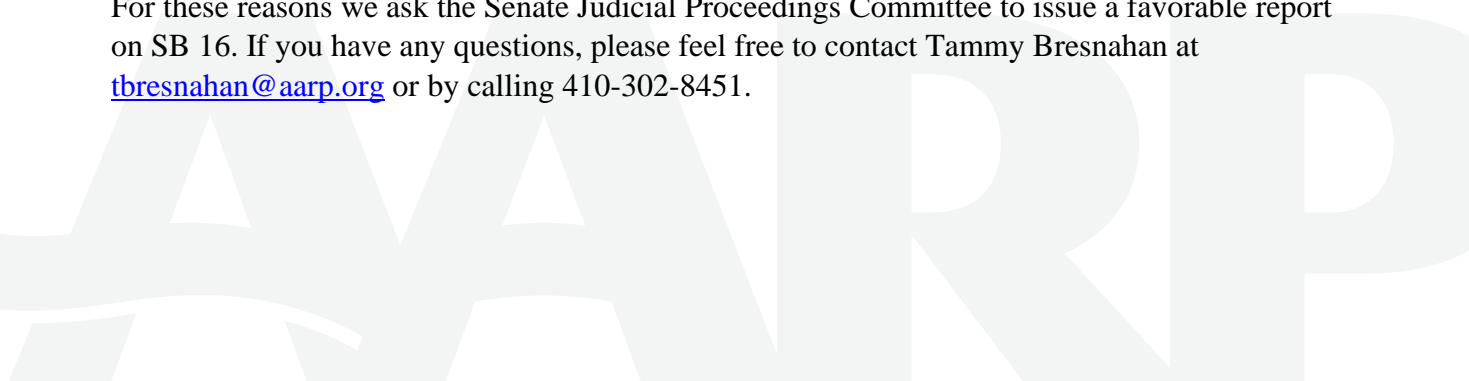
Everyone should feel safe crossing a street. But the streets can be dangerous, especially for older Americans. The number of pedestrians killed by vehicles rose 35 percent in the past decade — and the death rate is almost twice as high for people over 75 as for the general population.

Making streets safe has been an important issue for AARP. This issue is of critical importance to AARP's members. When older Marylanders don't feel safe crossing the street, they are less engaged.

AARP has included pedestrian safety as one of the measures of quality of life on our livability index, and we invite you to check out how well your city does, at [AARP Livability Index](#). You'll also be able to see how your area stacks up on housing, environment, health, convenience and opportunity.

Safe streets and roads are important for all of us. Many of us walk, and we drive cars, but we also use walkers, canes or even push a stroller. Drivers should share the roads, and roads should be safe for all. Help us make America's streets safer for all.

For these reasons we ask the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 16. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarp.org or by calling 410-302-8451.



SB16_IndivisibleHoCoMD_FAV_RuthAuerbach.pdf

Uploaded by: Ruth Auerbach

Position: FAV



SB16 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

Testimony before Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 31, 2023

Position: Favorable

Dear Judicial Proceedings 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 SB16, to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are grateful for the leadership of Senator Waldstreicher in sponsoring this bill.

Indivisible Howard County strongly supports all the programs to improve pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure and requirement for reports on relevant issues in the bill. However, this testimony will focus on the program to install crosswalks around Suburban Activity Centers and its impact. In Howard County, we have many Suburban Activity Centers, and many are located in the vicinity of state highways. Unfortunately, getting to and from these areas on foot can be difficult.

One of the benefits of the state installing such crosswalks that we have already observed in Howard County, is that the county will simultaneously improve the surrounding pedestrian and bike infrastructure to make the entire area more walkable and bikeable. For example, the recent installation of a crosswalk at the intersection of MD-175 and Dobbin Road, has not only made this busy intersection much safer for pedestrians, it has been followed by Howard County installing a mixed-use path along Dobbin Road, where no sidewalk previously existed. Phase 1 of the project has already been completed, and we are awaiting Phases 2 and 3. Personally, I have occasionally biked a very indirect route, completely avoiding the intersection, to get to shops and restaurants on the other side. I look forward to biking on this new infrastructure when it is completed and the trip is faster and safer.

Many more areas in Howard County and around the state could be made safe and accessible for pedestrians by the crosswalk installation program described in this legislation. The members of Indivisible Howard County enthusiastically support walkable and bikeable communities.

This legislation will promote safety, health, and the environment. Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation. **We respectfully urge a favorable report on this bill.**

Ruth Auerbach
Columbia, MD 21046

SB 16 - MoCo_Morningstar_FAV (GA 23).pdf

Uploaded by: Sara Morningstar

Position: FAV



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

SB 16

DATE: January 30, 2023

SPONSOR: Senators Waldstreicher and Augustine

ASSIGNED TO: Judicial Proceedings

CONTACT PERSON: Sara Morningstar (Sara.Morningstar@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: SUPPORT

Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

Senate Bill 16 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to recommend and implement specific pedestrian and bicycle safety elements when developing any construction or improvement project. If a new project will take more than a year to complete, MDOT must immediately advance all possible near-term safety improvements. Additionally, the bill includes a reporting requirement for the State Highway Administration that relates to pedestrian and bicycle safety.

Montgomery County is one of the first county governments in the country to adopt Vision Zero to eliminate serious and fatal injuries from our roadways by 2030. We are encouraged that the U.S. Department of Transportation pivoted last year from focusing on the actions of individual drivers to advancing roadway engineering design strategies to address roadway safety. This Safe System Approach builds on the goals of both preventing crashes and minimizing the harm caused to motorists, pedestrians, and bicyclists alike when crashes do occur, and it should ultimately lead to safer roadways.

Senate Bill 16 will advance the State's commitment to address roadway safety. The bill aligns with Montgomery County's Vision Zero goals, and as such, the County urges that the Committee adopt a favorable report.

SB016 SAFE Road Act of 2023 Support - Frederick Bi

Uploaded by: Shayne Boucher

Position: FAV

HB016 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

January 30, 2023

Tom Rinker, President
Frederick Bicycle Coalition
president@bikefrederick.org

Position: Support

Greetings Chair and Members of the Committee

I am an avid cyclist, a mobile bike service owner, Frederick County resident and President of Frederick Bicycle Coalition. [Frederick Bicycle Coalition](#) represents a broad coalition of recreational, commuter, mountain and adaptive cyclists. Our mission is to work with government, organizations, and individuals to promote increased and safe access for bicyclists and others in the Frederick County. We have over 1,700 followers on Facebook.

Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023 (SB 16) will provide the necessary resources for SHA to fix dangerous state roads for our vulnerable road users. The bill would act on the following measures:

- Increase annual budget spending levels on already identified safety and access gaps for our pedestrians and bicyclists
- Apply Context Driven Design Elements and FHWA Proven Safety Countermeasures in current and future transportation infrastructure preservation and maintenance projects
- Implement near-term, interim improvements that enhance safety in new transportation infrastructure and engineering projects taking 12 months or more to complete

Vulnerable road user fatalities are 100% preventable. No one should lose their life from choosing to walk or bike on Maryland's roadways. As stated by MDOT SHA's Zero Deaths policy, every crash is preventable and every life counts. In Maryland, the number of traffic-related pedestrian deaths is growing higher year over year. About 135 pedestrians and bicyclists are killed every year in the State of Maryland.

The status quo is not acceptable since there has been a 46% increase in pedestrian and bicyclists fatalities since 2012. MDOT, MHSO, and SHA are failing to meet NHTSA and FHWA HSIP pedestrian and bicyclist emphasis area fatality reduction targets. Preservation of state roads cannot be the budget priority at the risk of not improving roadway conditions that are dangerous to vulnerable road users and the root cause of traffic fatalities.

We request that the committee support the passage of SB 16.

STB MD Assembly 2023 Testimony Bill SB0016 (Safe A

Uploaded by: Michael Scepaniak

Position: FWA

Strong Towns Baltimore (STB) is supportive of Senator Waldstreicher's bill SB0016 (Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023). Decisive steps need to be taken to make Maryland's state-owned roads safer for non-motorists. Consider the following numbers. In Baltimore County, 12% of the roads are state-owned. Despite this low percentage, between 2015 and 2019, 79% of pedestrian fatalities occurred on those state-owned roads. [1]

With our general support made clear, we see several ways in which the bill should be strengthened. As such, STB's stand on the bill is **favorable with amendments**.

In section 2–103.1, the bill calls for MDOT to recommend and implement context-driven design elements for pedestrian and bicycle safety consistent with the U.S. DOT FHWA proven safety countermeasures [2] and MDOT's context-driven guide [3] and associated strategies. While we recognize the usefulness of these resources, they are inadequate.

The **NACTO Global Street Design Guide** [4] is a much richer, authoritative, and impartial source of safety guidelines for non-motorists, especially in the contexts that MDOT terms "Urban Core", "Urban Center", "Traditional Town Center", and "Suburban Activity Center". In making this recommendation, we'll note that both Baltimore and Washington, D.C. are NACTO member cities.

In section 2–609.A.3, the bill calls for the SHA to create a report that includes the number of new signalized crosswalks that have been approved for construction. We would like to see this report expanded to also **include the number that were denied** and the reasons why.

In section 2–609.B.3, the bill calls for the SHA to create a report that provides a plan for establishing safe pedestrian crossings on certain state highways that are within or adjacent to census tracts with significant transit dependency and a population density along the highway that exceeds 10,000 people per mile. This seems like an unreasonably high bar to us.

Instead of requiring **both** conditions, we would prefer to see **either** condition serving as a qualifier - significant transit dependency **or** a minimum population density.

The Baltimore region's transit system is relatively under-developed and immature. As such, the only communities in the Baltimore region that would likely qualify as being significantly transit dependent are located in Baltimore City. However, MDOT SHA does not have any responsibility for maintaining any roads within the city.

We would like to see the 10,000 people per mile threshold lowered, as this high bar will prevent all but a very small area of the state from benefiting from the safety improvements offered by this bill.

While Silver Spring has a population density of 10,277 people per mile, College Park (for example) only clocks in at 6,191. In the Baltimore region, the population densities of many communities dominated by state-owned roads fall far short of the bill's current 10,000 threshold,

with Towson at 4,207, Owings Mills at 3,742, Perry Hall at 4,239, Catonsville at 3,201, Parkville at 7,424, and Timonium at 1,828. [5] Given these numbers, we believe **3,000 people per mile** is a much more appropriate threshold.

With the integration of the above-listed changes, the bill will stand to benefit a large number of pedestrians across the state in a meaningful way. We urge the committee to strongly consider integration of our suggestions and vote in support of this bill. Thank you for your time and attention.

[Strong Towns Baltimore](#)

Michael Scepaniak, Co-president

David House, Co-president

James Pizzurro

Joshua Spokes

Kim Dulay

John Locke

Shaun Lehmann

Omar Hamza

Alisa Williams

Henry Cook

[1] "Baltimore County Strategic Highway Safety Plan". October 8, 2020

<https://zerodeathsmd.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/SHSPBC.052621.pdf>

[2] U.S. DOT FHWA. "Proven Safety Countermeasures". As of January 27, 2023

<https://highways.dot.gov/safety/proven-safety-countermeasures>

[3] MDOT SHA. "Context Driven Guide". As of January 27, 2023

<https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/3476e680584c49e48303fe6d52ceeda9>

[4] National Association of City Transportation Officials. "Global Street Design Guide". As of January 27, 2023 <https://nacto.org/publication/global-street-design-guide/>

[5] U.S. Census Bureau. "QuickFacts". As of January 27, 2023

<https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/collegeparkcitymaryland,silverspringcdpmaryland,perryhallcdpmaryland,owingsmillscdpmaryland,towsoncdpmaryland,catonsvillecdpmaryland/PST045222>

SB0016 - SHA - SAFE Act - LOI_FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

January 31, 2023

The Honorable Will Smith
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 16 – Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2023

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 16 but offers the following information and amendments for the Committee’s consideration.

Senate Bill 16 requires the MDOT State Highway Administration (SHA) to recommend and implement pedestrian and bicycle safety design elements in all projects, implement incremental improvements when a project is projected to take more than 12 months to complete, report human resource data related to pedestrian and bicycle improvement projects, as well as analyze, plan for, and report on pedestrian crossing projects located on certain state highways.

The MDOT would like to note for the Committee that SHA Administrator Tim Smith has engaged in conversations with the bill sponsor about areas of concern in the bill, as drafted, as well as common goals; it is proposed that Senate Bill 16 be amended to conform to its cross-file, House Bill 70, and then additional specific amendment language has been offered to the sponsors for their consideration.

MDOT SHA’s proposed amendments would establish the continuation of an existing process that evaluates pedestrian and bicycle improvements through the context driven lens on improvements projects in our capital program. Regarding the suggested changes to both sections with reporting requirements, the proposed amendments would allow SHA the ability to quantify available information and provide the members of the General Assembly with human resource statistics that will clearly identify the resources dedicated to pedestrian and bike improvements across the state; as well as proposing an appropriate time frame to conduct analysis and develop a plan before producing a report.

The MDOT looks forward to continuing its partnership with the bill sponsor in the hope of reaching a consensus on bill language.

The MDOT SHA suggests that section (C-1) (1) be amended to:

(C-1) (1) THE DEPARTMENT, IN DEVELOPING IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS IN THE CAPITAL PROGRAM, SHALL RECOMMEND AND IMPLEMENT CONTEXT-DRIVEN

DESIGN ELEMENTS FOR PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY CONSISTENT WITH:

The MDOT SHA suggests that the following sections under 2-609 (A) be amended to:

(1) THE NUMBER OF STAFF POSITIONS THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION HAS DEDICATED TO IMPLEMENTING PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY IMPROVEMENTS BY TITLE AND DEPARTMENT;

(2) INFORMATION ABOUT EMPLOYEES DEDICATED TO SUPPORTING PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE SAFETY HIGHWAY SAFETY AND IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS FOR THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION, INCLUDING THE FOLLOWING:

- (I) WAGE, BENEFIT, AND COMPENSATION LEVELS;*
- (II) TITLE AND DEPARTMENT*

Finally, MDOT SHA suggests that the following sections under 2-609 (B) be amended to:

(B) ON OR BEFORE OCTOBER 1, 2024, THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION SHALL SUBMIT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, A REPORT WITH A FULL ANALYSIS OF AND PLAN FOR ALL STATE HIGHWAYS LOCATED IN SUBURBAN ACTIVITY CENTERS OR TRADITIONAL TOWN CENTERS, AS DEFINED BY THE STATE HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION'S CONTEXT ZONES GUIDE, THAT:

(1) INCLUDES AN INSTALLATION PLAN AND TIMELINE REQUIRED TO ESTABLISH SAFE PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS ON THESE STATE HIGHWAYS;

(2) USES ALL SIGNAL TYPES IN THE PLANNING OF ROAD CROSSINGS, INCLUDING FULL SIGNALS, PEDESTRIAN HYBRID BEACONS, AND ANY OTHER SIGNALS; AND

(3) EVALUATES THE PLACING OF PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS IN INTERVALS BEST DETERMINED BY A DATA DRIVEN APPROACH THAT CONSIDERS CONTEXT DRIVEN DESIGN CONCEPTS AND TRAFFIC CONDITIONS WITHIN OR ADJACENT TO THE CENSUS TRACTS WITH SIGNIFICANT TRANSIT DEPENDENCY AND A POPULATION DENSITY ALONG THE HIGHWAY THAT EXCEEDS 10,000 PEOPLE PER MILE.

The Honorable Will Smith
Page Three

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information as it deliberates on Senate Bill 16.

Respectfully submitted,

Mitch Baldwin
Acting Deputy Director
Office of Policy and Legislative Services
Maryland State Highway Administration
410-310-1056

Pilar Helm
Director
Office of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-841-1090