



TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE JUDICIAL PROCEEDINGS COMMITTEE

SB 593 Transportation - Maryland Transportation Authority - Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety and Accessibility

POSITION: Support

BY: Linda Kohn – President

Date: February 22, 2024

The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) agrees that SB 593 should be made law to create another tool that our state uses to make all of us safer. LWVMD's positions encourage individuals to conserve natural resources and reduce energy consumption. We support incentives which promote the use of alternative modes of travel that a bicyclist or pedestrian uses. If the use of bicycles and modes of travel that involve pedestrians aren't safe, that is hardly an incentive. No one wants injuries or 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 roads for use by 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 and incorporating waivers, we may actually save taxpayer dollars, but more importantly lives. Having a set committee established with prescribed members that reviews plans for our roads and sees how they can safely incorporate bikes and pedestrians into a plan should be used.

By evaluating highways that are controlled by MTA for safety, a pattern can be more easily followed and modified for each situation to help provide a safe environment for bicyclists and pedestrians. Who better to evaluate a highway than a hand selected group of people that can advise State agencies?

SB 593 provides a prescribed committee to examine the possibility of a pathway, bike lane, or road on Maryland's MTA controlled roads, and gives authority to issue waivers. The public deserves a safer environment for pedestrians and bicyclists.

LWVMD urges a favorable report on SB 593.