



SIERRA CLUB

MARYLAND CHAPTER

P.O. Box 278
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Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB 375, Bicycles - Play Vehicles, and Unicycles – Authorizations and Requirements

Position: Support

Hearing Date: February 6, 2025

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB 375. This bill authorizes a person to ride a bicycle or related equipment on a sidewalk unless prohibited by local ordinance, while also yielding the right-of-way to a pedestrian or a person riding on an electric personal assistive mobility device.

Allowing cyclists to ride on sidewalks would enhance safety for both cyclists and motorists by creating separation between the two modes of transportation. Ideally, cyclists would be able to ride in a protected, separated bike lane. While we are excited to see Maryland's growing miles of bike lanes, there are still significantly fewer bike lane miles than sidewalk miles. In places where cyclists may feel endangered by riding on the street, the option to ride on the sidewalk provides them with a certain degree of separation and thus safety.

Given that nearly 30% of greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland are produced by vehicles on our roads, promoting alternative modes of transportation is a key strategy in combatting climate change. Bicycling is an especially promising mode of transportation because it has the potential to replace many car trips. Over half of all trips made in the U.S. in 2021 were under three miles, an easy biking distance for most. In addition, nearly half of Americans reported wishing to be able to ride their bikes more often, with the main barrier stated being concerns over their safety.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report on HB 375.

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