

Testimony on HB 375
Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements
House Environment & Transportation Committee

Date: February 4, 2025

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition for Smarter Growth supports **HB 375 “Bikes on Sidewalks”**. Our organization advocates for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements will resolve an oversight in Maryland law by allowing bikes on sidewalks except for local ordinance prohibitions. Currently, riding on sidewalks is prohibited in Maryland unless allowed by the local jurisdiction – and only three counties allow it. HB 375 would require people on bikes to yield the right-of-way to pedestrians and people using mobility devices on sidewalks and in crosswalks.

HB 375 would ensure Marylanders can more safely and legally use sidewalks when needed. Unfortunately, despite recent advances in designing streets to accommodate all users, many stretches of roadway in the state are still unsafe for riding a bike. Marylanders on bikes need to use available sidewalks at times due to high-speed car traffic or lack of safe accommodations for cyclists.

In areas where the Coalition for Smarter Growth works, **many suburban arterials encourage high motor vehicle speeds and still lack facilities for residents and workers to travel safely by bicycle in the roadway – but may have a sidewalk that can provide a safe alternative.** A stretch of sidewalk in such a spot, may provide a critical safe link for someone on a bike to reach a destination – ideally a stop-gap measure until future on-street bike accommodations and overall safer design speeds can be implemented. In particular, Prince George’s County does not have a local ordinance in place that allows people on bikes to use sidewalks when appropriate. HB 375 would clear up Maryland law.

We ask for a **favorable report for HB 375** by the committee. Thank you.