

March 25, 2025

HB0628: Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction

Chair Smith and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I support HB0628, which would require prioritizing funding for sidewalks and bike paths along areas where a complete streets policy exists or in line with a Vision Zero program.

Complete Streets projects and Vision Zero policies exist because we know of many areas where pedestrians and bicyclists cannot safely get from point A to B. Having safe sidewalks and adequate bike paths will not only keep users safe, but connect communities.

We need to build complete streets throughout our neighborhoods and certainly along main thoroughfares which are sometimes the only route to connect schools, libraries, and community centers. We know that when adults maintain a healthy lifestyle, medical costs can decrease around \$2500 per year¹. So let's create safe walking paths for the people of Maryland to begin or maintain healthy habits that will benefit them the rest of their lives.

I urge a favorable reading from the committee so that HB0628 can be brought to the floor for a vote.

Sincerely,

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¹ <https://bmjopensem.bmj.com/content/7/1/e001038>