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**Testimony in Support of HB 177
Vehicle Laws - Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Crosswalks**

This bill aims to enhance roadway safety for bicyclists, in keeping with our State's official goal to eliminate fatalities and serious injuries on our roadways. An identical version of the bill passed the House unanimously in 2025.

Intersections are especially dangerous for cyclists; one in three crashes in Maryland involving a bicyclist happen at an intersection.¹ This bill would allow all cyclists, whether they are riding on the road, in a bike lane, or on a sidewalk to proceed through an intersection when the parallel pedestrian signal changes to "walk." This head start to begin crossing the street before vehicular traffic will enhance safety for everyone.

Current state law allows bicyclists who are riding on a *sidewalk* to proceed through an intersection when a pedestrian signal changes to "walk," even when the traffic light is still red. A bicyclist who is riding in a *bike lane or on the road*, however, cannot proceed under current state law until they have a green light, regardless of the pedestrian signal. In essence, bicyclists operating on our roadways are treated the same as vehicles despite bicyclists having more in common with pedestrians than automobiles.

This legislation would only apply at intersections that have a leading pedestrian interval for the crosswalk. Leading pedestrian intervals generally give pedestrians a walk signal to begin crossing the street before the traffic signal turns green and cars start moving. This advanced signaling has proven to save lives by increasing visibility of pedestrians, reducing conflict between pedestrians and vehicles, increasing the likelihood of motorists yielding to pedestrians, and enhancing safety for pedestrians with slower mobility.² HB 177 would provide these same safety benefits to bicyclists.

¹ MDOT: [Annual Bicycle Crash Data Report](#). July 8, 2024.

² Federal Highway Administration: [Proven Safety Measures: Leading Pedestrian Intervals; Safety Effectiveness of Leading Pedestrian Intervals Evaluated by a Before-After Study with Comparison Groups; San Francisco PedSafe Phase II Final Implementation Report And Executive Summary](#); and [Safety Evaluation of Protected Left-Turn Phasing and Leading Pedestrian Intervals on Pedestrian Safety](#)

A 2024 public opinion poll commissioned by Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety found that more than half of the public is “extremely concerned” or “very concerned” about being on the roads when walking or biking.³ This level of public concern shows the need for enhanced safety measures.

The state of California, the District of Columbia, and New York City have adopted this practice of allowing bicyclists to proceed with pedestrians. New York City cites the policy as an effective tool in the city’s Vision Zero strategy.⁴ The city’s Department of Transportation reported that the number of bicyclists killed or severely injured decreased by 37 percent after adding a head start for bicyclists.⁵

This simple change will improve safety for bicyclists in Maryland.

³ Advocates for Highway and Auto Safety: [2024 CARAVAN Survey](#)

⁴ Fox: [NYC council approves 'head start' for cyclists at intersections.](#)

⁵ New York Department of Transportation: [Left Turn Pedestrian & Bicyclist Crash Study](#)