

HOUSE BILL 1296

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6lr1434

By: **Delegates Terrasa, Hill, D. Jones, Lehman, and Stewart**

Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026

Assigned to: Economic Matters and Ways and Means

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Preliminary Subdivision and Site Plans – Safe School Route Reports –**
3 **Requirement**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a certain developer to prepare and submit a certain report
5 concerning safe school routes, subject to certain requirements, as part of a
6 preliminary subdivision or site plan; prohibiting a local jurisdiction from granting a
7 preliminary subdivision or site plan approval except under certain circumstances;
8 and generally relating to safe school routes for residential development projects.

9 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,
10 Article – Land Use
11 Section 1–401 and 10–103
12 Annotated Code of Maryland
13 (2012 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

14 BY adding to
15 Article – Land Use
16 Section 5–501 through 5–505 to be under the new subtitle “Subtitle 5. Safe School
17 Routes”
18 Annotated Code of Maryland
19 (2012 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Land Use**

23 1–401.

24 (a) Except as provided in this section, this division does not apply to charter
25 counties.

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



- 1 (b) The following provisions of this division apply to a charter county:
- 2 (1) this subtitle, including Parts II and III (Charter county –
3 Comprehensive plans);
- 4 (2) § 1–101(l), (m), and (o) (Definitions – “Plan”, “Priority funding area”,
5 and “Sensitive area”);
- 6 (3) § 1–201 (Visions);
- 7 (4) § 1–206 (Required education);
- 8 (5) § 1–207 (Annual report – In general);
- 9 (6) § 1–208 (Annual report – Measures and indicators);
- 10 (7) Title 1, Subtitle 3 (Consistency);
- 11 (8) Title 1, Subtitle 5 (Growth Tiers);
- 12 (9) § 4–104(c) (Limitations – Bicycle parking);
- 13 (10) § 4–104(d) (Limitations – Manufactured homes and modular dwellings);
- 14 (11) § 4–208 (Exceptions – Maryland Accessibility Code);
- 15 (12) § 4–210 (Permits and variances – Solar panels);
- 16 (13) § 4–211 (Change in zoning classification – Energy generating systems);
- 17 (14) § 4–212 (Agritourism);
- 18 (15) § 4–213 (Alcohol production);
- 19 (16) § 4–214 (Agricultural alcohol production);
- 20 (17) § 4–215 (Pollinator–friendly vegetation management);
- 21 (18) § 4–216 (Limitations – Family child care homes and large family child
22 care homes);
- 23 (19) Title 4, Subtitle 5 (Accessory Dwelling Units);
- 24 (20) § 5–102(d) (Subdivision regulations – Burial sites);
- 25 (21) § 5–104 (Major subdivision – Review);

1 (D) "SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE" MEANS SIDEWALKS, CROSSWALKS, BICYCLE
2 LANES, FOOTPATHS, MULTI-USE TRAILS, AND OTHER INFRASTRUCTURE THAT
3 PROVIDE SAFE PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ACCESS TO A PUBLIC SCHOOL.

4 (E) "SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE REPORT" MEANS AN ANALYSIS SUBMITTED BY A
5 DEVELOPER DETAILING SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING
6 INFRASTRUCTURE GAPS AND MITIGATION MEASURES.

7 **5-502.**

8 IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT NEW RESIDENTIAL
9 DEVELOPMENTS ACTIVELY SUPPORT SAFE SCHOOL ROUTES BY REQUIRING
10 DEVELOPERS TO IDENTIFY, ASSESS, AND IF NECESSARY, MITIGATE HAZARDS IN
11 PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE ROUTES TO SCHOOLS.

12 **5-503.**

13 (A) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN SUBSECTION (B) OF THIS SECTION, THIS
14 SUBTITLE APPLIES TO ALL RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS PROPOSED BY A
15 DEVELOPER THAT:

16 (1) INCLUDE AT LEAST FIVE RESIDENTIAL DWELLING UNITS; AND

17 (2) ARE LOCATED WITHIN WALKING DISTANCE OF AN AFFECTED
18 SCHOOL, AS DETERMINED BY THE APPLICABLE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

19 (B) THIS SECTION DOES NOT APPLY TO RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT
20 PROJECTS INTENDED AS HOUSING FOR OLDER PERSONS IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE
21 FEDERAL FAIR HOUSING ACT.

22 **5-504.**

23 (A) AS PART OF A PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION OR SITE PLAN, A DEVELOPER
24 SHALL PREPARE AND SUBMIT A SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE REPORT.

25 (B) A SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE REPORT UNDER SUBSECTION (A) OF THIS
26 SECTION SHALL:

27 (1) IDENTIFY:

28 (I) EACH AFFECTED SCHOOL THAT WILL SERVE THE PROPOSED
29 DEVELOPMENT; AND

1 (II) FOR EACH AFFECTED SCHOOL:

2 1. EXISTING PEDESTRIAN AND BICYCLE
3 INFRASTRUCTURE; AND

4 2. A PROPOSED SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE;

5 (2) INCLUDE AN ASSESSMENT OF GAPS OR HAZARDS ALONG
6 IDENTIFIED SAFE SCHOOL ROUTES, INCLUDING:

7 (I) MISSING SIDEWALKS;

8 (II) UNSAFE ROAD CROSSINGS; AND

9 (III) A LACK OF BIKE LANES; AND

10 (3) IF GAPS OR HAZARDS EXIST UNDER ITEM (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION,
11 PROPOSE MITIGATION MEASURES, INCLUDING:

12 (I) CONSTRUCTION OF SIDEWALKS OR MULTI-USE PATHS
13 BETWEEN THE PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND THE AFFECTED SCHOOL OR PUBLIC
14 SCHOOL BUS SHELTER;

15 (II) INSTALLATION OF CROSSWALKS, SIGNAGE, OR
16 TRAFFIC-CALMING FEATURES; AND

17 (III) CONNECTIVITY TO EXISTING PUBLIC PEDESTRIAN OR
18 BICYCLE NETWORKS.

19 (C) A DEVELOPER SHALL COORDINATE WITH THE LOCAL COUNTY BOARD OF
20 EDUCATION AND THE MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TO ENSURE
21 A SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE PROPOSED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION ALIGNS
22 WITH SCHOOL ACCESS POINTS.

23 **5-505.**

24 (A) A LOCAL JURISDICTION MAY NOT GRANT PRELIMINARY SUBDIVISION
25 OR SITE PLAN APPROVAL FOR A RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT SUBJECT TO
26 THIS SUBTITLE UNTIL AN APPLICABLE SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE REPORT IS REVIEWED
27 AND APPROVED BY THE LOCAL PLANNING APPROVAL AUTHORITY AND THE
28 APPLICABLE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION.

1 **(B) UNTIL SUCH TIME AS THE NECESSARY IMPROVEMENTS IDENTIFIED IN A**
2 **SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE REPORT ARE COMPLETED TO THE SATISFACTION OF THE**
3 **LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY AND THE COUNTY BOARD OF EDUCATION, A LOCAL**
4 **JURISDICTION MAY:**

5 **(1) IMPOSE A FINANCIAL GUARANTEE ON THE DEVELOPER FOR THE**
6 **IMPROVEMENTS IDENTIFIED IN THE SAFE SCHOOL ROUTE REPORT; AND**

7 **(2) WITHHOLD THE ISSUANCE OF A BUILDING PERMIT.**

8 10–103.

9 (a) Except as provided in this section, this division does not apply to Baltimore
10 City.

11 (b) The following provisions of this division apply to Baltimore City:

12 (1) this title;

13 (2) § 1–101(m) (Definitions – “Priority funding area”);

14 (3) § 1–101(o) (Definitions – “Sensitive area”);

15 (4) § 1–201 (Visions);

16 (5) § 1–206 (Required education);

17 (6) § 1–207 (Annual report – In general);

18 (7) § 1–208 (Annual report – Measures and indicators);

19 (8) Title 1, Subtitle 3 (Consistency);

20 (9) Title 1, Subtitle 4, Parts II and III (Home Rule Counties –
21 Comprehensive Plans; Implementation);

22 (10) § 4–104(c) (Limitations – Bicycle parking);

23 (11) § 4–104(d) (Limitations – Manufactured homes and modular dwellings);

24 (12) § 4–205 (Administrative adjustments);

25 (13) § 4–208 (Exceptions – Maryland Accessibility Code);

26 (14) § 4–210 (Permits and variances – Solar panels);

- 1 (15) § 4–211 (Change in zoning classification – Energy generating systems);
- 2 (16) § 4–215 (Pollinator–friendly vegetation management);
- 3 (17) § 4–216 (Limitations – Family child care homes and large family child
4 care homes);
- 5 (18) Title 4, Subtitle 5 (Accessory Dwelling Units);
- 6 (19) § 5–102(d) (Subdivision regulations – Burial sites);
- 7 (20) **TITLE 5, SUBTITLE 5 (SAFE SCHOOL ROUTES);**
- 8 **(21)** Title 7, Subtitle 1 (Development Mechanisms);
- 9 **[(21)] (22)** Title 7, Subtitle 2 (Transfer of Development Rights);
- 10 **[(22)] (23)** Title 7, Subtitle 3 (Development Rights and Responsibilities
11 Agreements);
- 12 **[(23)] (24)** Title 7, Subtitle 4 (Inclusionary Zoning);
- 13 **[(24)] (25)** Title 7, Subtitle 5 (Housing Expansion and Affordability); and
- 14 **[(25)] (26)** Title 11, Subtitle 2 (Civil Penalty).

15 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
16 October 1, 2026.