

HOUSE BILL 1491

F1, L1

6lr2983
CF SB 71

By: **Delegates Odom, Behler, Boaf, Feldmark, Holmes, Lehman, J. Long, Phillips, and Simmons**

Introduced and read first time: February 13, 2026

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Education – Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission – Establishment**

3 FOR the purpose of establishing the Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission to
4 identify, coordinate, and secure funding for safe pathways for students traveling to
5 and from school; and generally relating to the Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways
6 Commission.

7 BY adding to

8 Article – Education

9 Section 7–811

10 Annotated Code of Maryland

11 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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

14 **Article – Education**

15 **7–811.**

16 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**
17 **INDICATED.**

18 **(2) “COMMISSION” MEANS THE INTERJURISDICTIONAL SAFE**
19 **PATHWAYS COMMISSION.**

20 **(3) “IEP” MEANS AN INDIVIDUALIZED EDUCATION PROGRAM AS**
21 **DEFINED UNDER THE FEDERAL INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES EDUCATION ACT.**

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 **(4) (I) “SAFE PATHWAYS” MEANS PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE TO**
2 **ENSURE SAFE ROUTES FOR STUDENTS TRAVELING TO AND FROM SCHOOL,**
3 **INCLUDING SIDEWALKS, CROSSWALKS, TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES, BIKE LANES,**
4 **PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES, AND SCHOOL ZONE SIGNAGE.**

5 **(II) “SAFE PATHWAYS” INCLUDES EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS**
6 **AND POLICY INITIATIVES THAT PROMOTE SAFE ROUTES FOR STUDENTS TRAVELING**
7 **TO AND FROM SCHOOL.**

8 **(B) THERE IS AN INTERJURISDICTIONAL SAFE PATHWAYS COMMISSION.**

9 **(C) (1) THE COMMISSION CONSISTS OF THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS:**

10 **(I) THE STATE SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS, OR THE STATE**
11 **SUPERINTENDENT’S DESIGNEE;**

12 **(II) THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION, OR THE**
13 **SECRETARY’S DESIGNEE;**

14 **(III) THE SECRETARY OF HEALTH, OR THE SECRETARY’S**
15 **DESIGNEE;**

16 **(IV) THE SECRETARY OF DISABILITIES, OR THE SECRETARY’S**
17 **DESIGNEE; AND**

18 **(V) THE FOLLOWING MEMBERS, APPOINTED BY THE STATE**
19 **SUPERINTENDENT:**

20 **1. FOUR REPRESENTATIVES FROM LOCAL SCHOOL**
21 **SYSTEMS;**

22 **2. THREE REPRESENTATIVES FROM MUNICIPAL LOCAL**
23 **MANAGEMENT BOARDS;**

24 **3. ONE STUDENT WHO ATTENDS A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN**
25 **THE STATE;**

26 **4. ONE STUDENT WITH AN IEP WHO ATTENDS A PUBLIC**
27 **SCHOOL IN THE STATE;**

28 **5. ONE PARENT OF A CHILD WITH AN IEP WHO ATTENDS**
29 **A PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE STATE;**

1 **6. ONE PARENT OF A PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENT IN THE**
2 **STATE; AND**

3 **7. TWO MEMBERS WHO REPRESENT PRIVATE OR**
4 **NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS WITH EXPERIENCE IN TRANSPORTATION OR**
5 **INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING.**

6 **(2) THE GOVERNOR SHALL DESIGNATE A CHAIR OF THE COMMISSION**
7 **FROM AMONG ITS MEMBERS.**

8 **(3) EACH MEMBER SERVES FOR A TERM OF 3 YEARS.**

9 **(4) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL PROVIDE STAFF AND OTHER**
10 **NECESSARY SUPPORT TO THE COMMISSION.**

11 **(5) A MEMBER OF THE COMMISSION MAY NOT RECEIVE**
12 **COMPENSATION FOR SERVING ON THE COMMISSION, BUT IS ENTITLED TO**
13 **REIMBURSEMENT FOR EXPENSES UNDER THE STANDARD STATE TRAVEL**
14 **REGULATIONS, AS PROVIDED IN THE STATE BUDGET.**

15 **(6) THE COMMISSION SHALL MEET AT LEAST FOUR TIMES A YEAR, OR**
16 **AS NECESSARY TO FULFILL ITS DUTIES.**

17 **(D) (1) THE PURPOSE OF THE COMMISSION IS TO IDENTIFY,**
18 **COORDINATE, AND SECURE FUNDING FOR SAFE PATHWAYS FOR STUDENTS**
19 **TRAVELING TO AND FROM SCHOOL.**

20 **(2) THE COMMISSION SHALL COLLABORATE WITH LOCAL**
21 **GOVERNMENTS, STATE AGENCIES, AND RELEVANT STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP**
22 **INFRASTRUCTURE, PROGRAMS, AND GRANT STRATEGIES.**

23 **(E) THE COMMISSION SHALL:**

24 **(1) CONDUCT AN INVENTORY OF CURRENT SAFE PATHWAYS FOR**
25 **STUDENT TRAVEL;**

26 **(2) IDENTIFY GAPS IN SAFE PATHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE AND**
27 **PROGRAMS;**

28 **(3) EVALUATE FUNDING NEEDS AND OPPORTUNITIES, INCLUDING**
29 **FEDERAL GRANTS, STATE TRANSPORTATION FUNDS, PRIVATE GRANTS, AND**
30 **PHILANTHROPIC CONTRIBUTIONS;**

1 **(4) DEVELOP A STRATEGIC PLAN TO COORDINATE**
2 **INTERJURISDICTIONAL INVESTMENTS AND MAXIMIZE AVAILABLE FUNDING;**

3 **(5) RECOMMEND POLICIES TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND STATE**
4 **AGENCIES TO MAXIMIZE AVAILABLE FUNDING;**

5 **(6) IDENTIFY INNOVATIVE PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIP MODELS**
6 **TO FUND SAFE PATHWAYS; AND**

7 **(7) FOSTER COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT, INCLUDING INPUT FROM**
8 **STUDENTS, PARENTS, AND SCHOOL PERSONNEL.**

9 **(F) (1) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 EACH YEAR, THE COMMISSION**
10 **SHALL SUBMIT TO THE GOVERNOR AND, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1257 OF THE**
11 **STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION,**
12 **ENERGY, AND THE ENVIRONMENT, AND THE HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE**
13 **A REPORT THAT INCLUDES:**

14 **(I) AN ASSESSMENT OF CURRENT SAFE PATHWAYS;**

15 **(II) OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUNDING, INCLUDING CURRENT**
16 **FUNDING BEING PURSUED;**

17 **(III) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR POLICY AND INFRASTRUCTURE**
18 **IMPROVEMENTS; AND**

19 **(IV) THE PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTING INTERJURISDICTIONAL**
20 **COORDINATION.**

21 **(2) THE REPORT MAY INCLUDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR**
22 **LEGISLATION OR BUDGETARY APPROPRIATIONS THAT THE COMMISSION**
23 **CONSIDERS NECESSARY TO IMPROVE STUDENT SAFETY AND FUND**
24 **INFRASTRUCTURE.**

25 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect
26 October 1, 2026. It shall remain effective for a period of 7 years and, at the end of September
27 30, 2033, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be
28 abrogated and of no further force and effect.