

# SENATE BILL 158

L1  
SB 526/25 – EEE

(PRE-FILED)

6lr1158  
CF 6lr2436

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By: **Senator Ellis**

Requested: October 10, 2025

Introduced and read first time: January 14, 2026

Assigned to: Education, Energy, and the Environment

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Counties – Construction of Sidewalks and Crosswalks – Safe Alternative Routes**  
3 **to Public Schools**

4 FOR the purpose of requiring a county board of education each year to prepare and post in  
5 a certain manner a report that identifies pathways that public school students may  
6 use to travel to school using only safe alternative routes under certain circumstances;  
7 requiring the governing body of a county each year to review a certain report and  
8 construct any sidewalks and crosswalks necessary to create safe alternative routes  
9 for public school students under certain circumstances; requiring the governing body  
10 of a county to develop a certain plan with a certain governmental entity or person  
11 and make certain efforts to execute the plan under certain circumstances; and  
12 generally relating to safe alternative routes to public schools.

13 BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,  
14 Article – Education  
15 Section 7–801(b)(1)  
16 Annotated Code of Maryland  
17 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

18 BY adding to  
19 Article – Education  
20 Section 7–801(e)  
21 Annotated Code of Maryland  
22 (2025 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

23 BY adding to  
24 Article – Local Government  
25 Section 12–506.1  
26 Annotated Code of Maryland  
27 (2013 Volume and 2025 Supplement)

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



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

**Article – Education**

7–801.

(b) (1) At its own expense, a county governing body may provide transportation for public school students in addition to the transportation provided by the State.

(E) (1) IN THIS SUBSECTION, “SAFE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE” INCLUDES:

(I) A ROAD WITH SIDEWALKS AND, AT INTERSECTIONS, CROSSWALKS;

(II) A FOOT PATH; AND

(III) A BIKE PATH.

(2) EACH YEAR, A COUNTY BOARD SHALL PREPARE A REPORT THAT IDENTIFIES:

(I) FOR EACH PUBLIC SCHOOL IN THE COUNTY, THOSE AREAS OF THE COUNTY WHERE A STUDENT WHO IS REGULARLY ASSIGNED TO THE SCHOOL WOULD BE INELIGIBLE FOR TRANSPORTATION SERVICES BASED ON THE DISTANCE BETWEEN A RESIDENCE AND THE SCHOOL; AND

(II) PATHWAYS THAT A STUDENT RESIDING IN AN AREA IDENTIFIED UNDER ITEM (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH MAY USE TO TRAVEL BETWEEN THE STUDENT’S RESIDENCE AND REGULARLY ASSIGNED SCHOOL USING ONLY A SAFE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE OR A CONTIGUOUS SERIES OF SAFE ALTERNATIVE ROUTES.

(3) THE COUNTY BOARD SHALL POST TO THE COUNTY’S WEBSITE EACH REPORT PREPARED UNDER PARAGRAPH (2) OF THIS SUBSECTION.

**Article – Local Government**

12–506.1.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “SAFE ALTERNATIVE ROUTE” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 7–801 OF THE EDUCATION ARTICLE.

1           **(B) THIS SECTION APPLIES TO ALL COUNTIES.**

2           **(C) EACH YEAR, THE GOVERNING BODY OF A COUNTY SHALL:**

3                   **(1) REVIEW THE REPORT REQUIRED UNDER § 7-801(E)(2) OF THE**  
4 **EDUCATION ARTICLE; AND**

5                   **(2) CONSTRUCT ANY SIDEWALKS AND CROSSWALKS NECESSARY TO**  
6 **CREATE SAFE ALTERNATIVE ROUTES FOR STUDENTS AS IDENTIFIED IN THE REPORT.**

7           **(D) IF THE GOVERNING BODY OF A COUNTY MUST ALTER A ROAD THAT IS**  
8 **NOT SUBJECT TO THE JURISDICTION OF THE COUNTY IN ORDER TO MEET THE**  
9 **REQUIREMENTS OF THIS SECTION, THE GOVERNING BODY SHALL:**

10                   **(1) DEVELOP A PLAN WITH THE GOVERNMENTAL ENTITY OR PERSON**  
11 **THAT HAS CONTROL OF THE ROAD; AND**

12                   **(2) MAKE REASONABLE EFFORTS TO EXECUTE THE PLAN IN AN**  
13 **EXPEDITIOUS MANNER.**

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