



MONTGOMERY COUNTY COUNCIL  
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND

ANDREW FRIEDSON  
COUNCILMEMBER  
DISTRICT 1

February 10, 2020

Delegate Kumar Barve  
Chair, Environment & Transportation Committee  
House of Delegates  
House Office Building, Room 251  
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis MD 21401

Chair Barve and Members of the House Environment & Transportation Committee,

I write today in strong support of House Bill 194, the Pedestrian Access Act of 2020.

This legislation would address the pressing issue of the State Highway Administration (SHA) allowing sidewalks adjacent to construction projects in pedestrian-heavy areas to be closed for months and years at a time. It would do so by requiring SHA to craft regulations governing when and for how long pedestrian access in a state-owned public right-of-way can be obstructed, similar to [legislation I have introduced](#) at the Montgomery County Council to address the same problem along County-owned public sidewalks.

I have been working closely with District 16 Delegate Marc Korman to address this problem as it is acute in downtown Bethesda, an area full of pedestrian activity that we both represent. Residents, workers, pedestrian and bicyclist safety advocates, and members of the construction and development community have helped us understand the particular challenges of sidewalks blocked for long periods of time and the difficulties of infill redevelopment in an urban setting. I believe we can do much better than the status quo with regulations that set the shared understanding and standard that preserving pedestrian access on the same side of the street of a construction project is the default, not the exception.

Thank you to all sponsors of House Bill 194, including District 16 Delegates Kelly and Love. I urge you to give a favorable committee vote to this important legislation and thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Friedson".

Andrew Friedson  
Councilmember, District 1