



February 11, 2020

The Honorable Dolores Kelly
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3rd Floor, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 285
Position: Favorable with Amendment

Dear Chair Kelly and Members of the Senate Finance Committee:

The International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC) is the trade organization representing the shopping center industry. Worldwide, the organization maintains almost 70,000 members. In Maryland, ICSC represents the interests of almost 1,900 shopping centers in every county and municipality in the State.

The provisions of Senate Bill 285 seek to improve access for pedestrians and bicyclists traveling to and from metro stations during work improvement on State Highways. ICSC has always been a leading proponent of transit-oriented development. While we agree with the goal of the legislation in maintaining access during necessary intervals of road construction we also maintain reservations about certain requirements that seem over reaching and could possibly lead to operators delaying improvements that ultimately benefit broader communities.

Specifically, the 2-mile radius seems rather burdensome given the geographic area that a permit holder seeking to improve a State Highway would be responsible to cover. Typically, when referring to access to transit-oriented development, ½ mile is the standard.

Suggested amendment – reduce the 2-mile area to ½ mile.

ICSC members also maintain concerns with the bike lane mandates contained within the bill. Requiring lanes to be shifted and or narrowed to accommodate bike lanes could be cost prohibitive given the “permittee” is attempting to make an improvement that ultimately benefits the larger community.

ICSC would prefer a more extensive discussion on bike lane requirements.

ICSC would also ask that the term “Maryland Regional Transit Administration Transit Stations” (page 2, line 11 of the bill) be clarified to exclude local bus stops so as to ensure the reach and application of the bill is not overly-broad and unintentionally burdensome.

Thank you for your consideration, please contact Sushant Sidh at 410-268-3099 for additional information.