



**CITY OF TAKOMA PARK,
MARYLAND**

**HB 656
Support**

**Environment and Transportation Committee
February 17th, 2022
HB 656: SAFE Roads Act**

**Testimony of Mayor Kate Stewart
City Council of the City of Takoma Park
KateS@takomaparkmd.gov**

The City of Takoma Park supports the goals and intent of House Bill 656, and urges favorable consideration.

A great deal needs to be done to shift how we look at pedestrian and bicyclist safety. The SAFE Roads Act would provide one way to begin to shift the car-focused paradigm that now dictates how we approach our communities to one that promotes biking and walking.

We should be doing all we can to prevent roadway fatalities, and this bill will put in place procedures that are long overdue to provide the data and funding to increase roadway safety. The City of Takoma Park strongly endorses this bill as a municipality with many State Highway Administration roadways, and first-hand experience with how long it can take to have assessments and engineering countermeasures proposed and then actually implemented. We also have experience going through the long design process only to be told a project is not funded and no changes, even incremental improvements, will be made to make the roadways safer.

We thank the individual SHA traffic engineers we have worked with in the City. Unfortunately, many of the barriers to addressing roadway safety are built into how SHA is structured and conducts its work. The SAFE Roads Act begins to address some of the current dysfunction.

In sum, the City of Takoma Park supports the goals and intent of this bill, and encourages a favorable vote.