



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL: House Bill 656 - Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2022

SPONSOR: Delegate Charkoudian

HEARING DATE: February 17, 2022

COMMITTEE: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT: Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411

POSITION: SUPPORT

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS House Bill 656 - Safe Access for All (SAFE) Roads Act of 2022**, which requires the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to recommend and implement context-driven design elements for pedestrian and bicycle safety consistent with the United States Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration proven safety countermeasures and the SHA's context-driven guide and associated strategies.

HB 656 also contains favorable language to require any new construction or improvement project projected to take more than 12 months to complete to implement all possible incremental, near-term safety improvements immediately and maintain each projects priority ranking. The bill also mandates a funding stream, via the Governor's annual budget, for Fiscal Years 2024 through 2028, with a 10% minimum increase each year beginning in Fiscal Year 2025.

The Prince George's County Department of Public Works and Transportation strongly recommends support of **HB 656**, specifically, due to its stated goal to ensure all engineering and safety improvements are consistent with Maryland's Vision Zero program. Vision Zero strategy focuses on the High Injury Network (HIN) and eliminating all roadway related deaths by dates adopted via legislative resolutions. The requirements of **HB 656** dovetail with the Vision Zero Prince George's program mission and goals. The requirement that all types of construction and improvement projects undertaken by SHA contain industry standard context-driven design elements will add another tool in Vision Zero Maryland and Vision Zero Prince George's programs to continue to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on roadways.

Vision Zero strategy focuses on the High Injury Network (HIN). Since, its creation Vision Zero Prince George's has successfully worked with MDOT SHA's Office of Traffic Safety to identify the top 20 roadway corridors within the County with greatest frequency and severity of

pedestrian and bicycle crashes. By identifying these corridors efforts may be focused on the areas with the highest need of improvements.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS HB 656** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.