



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

HB 519

February 16, 2023

TO: Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Interim Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: House Bill 519 – Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements

POSITION: Support

Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill 519.

HB 519 allows the use of bicycles and similar vehicles on sidewalks unless forbidden in local ordinance. This language affirms the right of more vulnerable road users to a safe riding experience while also prioritizing the comfort and safety of pedestrians.

Maryland is home to many communities lacking safe and reliable access to safe transportation alternatives. Our transportation corridors are lacking in terms of high-quality, dedicated bike and e-scooter infrastructure. Changing Maryland's existing stance regarding the riding of bikes on sidewalks from "prohibited" to "allowed" will expand access and send a clear message that our transportation corridors should accommodate all users. Though a long-term goal of local governments, including Baltimore City, is the installation and construction of safe bicycle infrastructure, we believe this is a step in the right direction.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 519. We believe the legislation would expand safe access to our streets for a variety of road users.