

CSG HB94_1-31-23.pdf

Uploaded by: Cheryl Cort

Position: FAV

January 31, 2023

Delegate Kumar Barve, Chair
Committee on Transportation and Environment
Maryland Housing of Delegates

Position: **Support** HB 94 - Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits – Establishment

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth, the leading non-profit organization in the D.C. region, including suburban Maryland, advocating for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We would like to express our support for House Bill 94. We agree with the bill's intention to give local authorities the option to evaluate and lower speed limits on highways. Highways have a diversity of users, including people walking, biking, pushing strollers, using a wheelchair, and driving cars and trucks. The design speed and the posted speed limit are often too high, and do not sufficiently accommodate the safety and access needs of different users. Drivers operating vehicles at high speeds is a grave danger to people. Collisions often result in severe injury and death. In fact, recent years have been the deadliest for people walking in decades. According to [Dangerous by Design](#), "the four most recent years on record (2016-2019) are the most deadly years for pedestrian deaths since 1990."

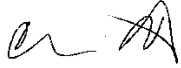
This bill enables local authorities to assess and change the speed limit to a more appropriate vehicle speed to better balance the needs of different users of a highway. Posted speed limits, along with clear signage, equitable enforcement, other deterrence measures, and most importantly, redesigning a roadway to a lower design speed, are all tools to ensure safe use of Maryland's public rights of way.

We support this bill and ask that the state allow local authorities to set speed limits appropriate to a local context. This is consistent with SHA's "context driven" approach and Vision Zero goals for state roads. Adjusting posted speed limits is one of the many tools needed to operate safe highways. Lower speed limits that better fit the local context, along with lower roadway design speeds for a particular community are crucial tools for addressing Maryland's safety and economic development goals. We ask the committee to give a favorable report to this bill.

Page 2 - CSG support for HB94

Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

Sincerely,



Cheryl Cort
Policy Director

HB0094-ET_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: FAV



House Bill 94

Vehicle Laws - Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation

Date: February 2, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 94. This bill grants local governments the ability to recognize public safety or neighborhood concerns, and decrease speeds to 15 miles per hour on roadways, following an appropriate engineering and traffic analysis.

Counties handle a wide range of road safety and maintenance responsibilities. These responsibilities include building and maintaining roads, distributing de-icing agents before a storm, plowing, speed enforcement, responding to accidents, planning and zoning approvals, etc. Establishing speed limits is already a local responsibility, governed by best practices, but the current state law limits the lower bounds of that local authority to 25 miles per hour, other than in Montgomery County and its municipalities.

This bill recognizes a reasonable process for communities to recognize specific instances where the 25 miles per hour standard may not fully preserve driver or pedestrian safety, and to act locally to remedy them. Such decisions would remain subject to an appropriate study and local accountability.

HB 94 represents another practical and reasonable tool for counties to protect our streets and mutual constituents. Accordingly, MACo **SUPPORTS** HB 94 urges the Committee to grant a **FAVORABLE** report.

BikeAAASupportHB94SpeedReduction-2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Jon Korin

Position: FAV



Support HB94 Speed Limits

Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County
P.O. Box 208, Arnold, MD 21012 www.bikeaaa.org

House Environment & Transportation Committee
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

February 1, 2023

RE: SUPPORT House Bill 94

Dear Chairman and Members of the Committee,

I am a resident of District 30, president of Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis and Anne Arundel County (“BikeAAA”), Chair of the Anne Arundel County Bicycle Advisory Commission, Member of the 2017 Maryland Bicycle Safety Task Force and avid Maryland cyclist for over 20 years. On behalf of BikeAAA and it’s more than 1,000 members, we support HB94. This bill will empower local jurisdictions to assess and reduce speed limits. This is especially important for vulnerable road users such as pedestrians, cyclists, the elderly, people with disabilities and schoolchildren who may cross or travel along our roads to access schools, parks, shopping areas and other destinations. Local jurisdictions are most aware of the use and context of local roads and should have the authority to reduce speed limits to increase safety. This bill also aligns with Maryland’s commitment to Vision Zero and the increasing adoption of Vision Zero by Maryland counties. Anne Arundel County is in the process of adopting Vision Zero.

Speed reduction reduces both the likelihood of a crash and also the severity of injury if a crash occurs. Please support HB94 to improve safety, especially for our most vulnerable.

Sincerely,

Jon Korin
President, Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County
Tel: 443-685-4103

HB 94 FAV MD Latino Caucus

Uploaded by: Madelin Martinez

Position: FAV



MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE LATINO CAUCUS

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MADELIN MARTINEZ, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

TO: Delegate Kumar P. Barve, Chair
Delegate Dana Stein, Vice Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee Members
FROM: Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus
DATE: January 31, 2023
RE: HB0094 Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities

The MLLC supports HB0094 Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities

The MLLC is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that improves the lives of Latinos throughout our state. The MLLC is a crucial voice in the development of public policy that uplifts the Latino community and benefits the state of Maryland. Thank you for allowing us the opportunity to express our support of HB0094.

According to the Maryland Department of Transportation, there were 544 fatal crashes on state highways in 2022, claiming the lives of drivers, passengers, pedestrians, bikers, and cyclists.¹ The report also indicates speed as the primary cause of accidents.¹ A new study by the Boston University School of Public Health (BUSPH) and Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health found that Black and Hispanic Americans are disproportionately affected by traffic-related deaths nationwide.² Overall, the age-adjusted pedestrian death rate increased from 1.7 per 100,000 in 2009 to 2.2 in 2018.³ Every racial and ethnic group experienced an increase in pedestrian death rate. Hispanics, for instance, saw a pedestrian death rate increase from 2.4 to 2.9, putting them at the second-highest pedestrian death rate.³

This bill will expand the application of statewide authorization for local authorities to decrease the maximum speed limit to no less than 15 miles per hour after performing an engineering and traffic investigation, subject to certain restrictions on the use of speed monitoring systems. Lowering the speed limit can save lives by increasing drivers' reaction time to hazards, pedestrians, bikes, and other obstacles. Since Hispanics have the second highest pedestrian death rate, their community would be positively impacted by this policy since this bill will give the authority to local governments to lower the speed limits based on community needs.

For these reasons, the Maryland Legislative Latino Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report on HB0094.

1. [2021 Annual Report. \(n.d.\). Maryland Highway Safety Office.](#)
2. [Raifman, M. A., & Choma, E. F. \(2022\). Disparities in Activity and Traffic Fatalities by Race/Ethnicity. *American Journal of Preventive Medicine*, 63\(2\), 160-167.](#)
3. [Center for Disease Control and Prevention. \(2020\). Age-Adjusted Pedestrian Death Rates, by Race/Ethnicity — National Vital Statistics System, United States, 2009 and 2018. *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*, 69.](#)

HB 0094 Local Speed Limit Reduction WRITTEN TESTIM

Uploaded by: Mary Lehman

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**HB 94 – VEHICLE LAWS – REDUCTION OF SPEED LIMITS BY LOCAL
AUTHORITIES**

SUPPORT

GOOD AFTERNOON CHAIR BARVE, VICE CHAIR STEIN AND ESTEEMED JUDICIAL PROCEEDING MEMBERS. I AM ASKING YOUR FAVORABLE REPORT FOR HB 94, A BILL THAT AUTHORIZES LOCAL GOVERNMENTS TO LOWER THE MAXIMUM SPEED LIMIT TO 15 MILES PER HOUR ON CERTAIN ROADWAYS AFTER PERFORMING AN ENGINEERING/TRAFFIC STUDY.

PEDESTRIAN FATALITIES ARE A SERIOUS PROBLEM IN MARYLAND. THE FASTER CARS TRAVEL, THE GREATER THE CHANCE FOR FATAL INJURIES TO PEDESTRIANS, BICYCLISTS, PASSENGERS, AND DRIVERS. DATA FROM THE FOUNDATION FOR TRAFFIC SAFETY SHOWS THAT THE AVERAGE RISK OF DEATH FOR A PEDESTRIAN STRUCK BY A CAR REACHES 10% AT AN IMPACT SPEED OF 23 MPH, 50% AT 42 MPH!! 75% AT 50 MPH!!! AND 90% RISK OF DEATH AT 58 MPH!!!! A PEDESTRIAN OR BICYCLIST STRUCK BY A MOTORIST DRIVING 40 MPH **IS EIGHT TIMES MORE LIKELY TO DIE** THAN A PEDESTRIAN OR A BICYCLIST STRUCK AT 20 MPH. THE GOAL OF HB 94 IS TO REDUCE INJURIES AND FATALITIES AND MAKE

DELEGATE MARY A. LEHMAN
Legislative District 21
Prince George's and
Anne Arundel Counties

Environment and Transportation
Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

MARYLAND ROADS SAFER BY GIVING LOCAL JURISDICTIONS THE AUTHORITY
TO LOWER SPEED LIMITS WHERE IT IS WARRANTED.

THIS LEGISLATION IS THE STATEWIDE VERSION OF A LOCAL BILL SPONSORED
BY THE MONTGOMERY COUNTY DELEGATION THAT PASSED IN 2021. THAT BILL
AUTHORIZED MONTGOMERY COUNTY AND ITS MUNICIPALITIES TO DECREASE
HIGHWAY SPEED LIMITS TO NOT LESS THAN 15 MILES PER HOUR AFTER
CONDUCTING AN ENGINEERING AND TRAFFIC INVESTIGATION.

IT ALSO PROHIBITED MONTGOMERY COUNTY AUTHORITIES FROM INSTALLING
NEW SPEED CAMERAS WHERE THE SPEED LIMIT HAS BEEN REDUCED PURSUANT
TO THE BILL'S AUTHORIZATION.

SINCE MONTGOMERY COUNTY IS NOW AUTHORIZED TO LOWER ITS SPEED LIMIT
TO 15 MILES PER HOUR, OTHER COUNTIES AND BALTIMORE CITY SHOULD HAVE
THE SAME OPTION. THE STATE AND MANY LOCAL GOVERNMENTS HAVE
ADOPTED VISION ZERO POLICIES TO ELIMINATE CAR-RELATED DEATHS AND
THIS BILL PROVIDES AN IMPORTANT TOOL TO ASSIST MARYLAND IN REALIZING
THAT GOAL, AND STOP WITH NEEDLESS TRAGEDIES.

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ADDITIONALLY, THE MANDATED TRAFFIC STUDY PROVIDES AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY FOR CITIZENS' INPUT AND CONCERNS TO BE VOICED.

THE HOUSE BILL CLARIFIES IMPLEMENTATION OF NEW SPEED MONITORING SYSTEMS IN AREAS WHERE THE SPEED LIMIT HAD BEEN REDUCED. HB 94 DOES NOT RESTRICT LOCAL JURISDICTIONS FROM INSTALLING SPEED CAMERAS ON A HIGHWAY SIMPLY BECAUSE THE SPEED LIMIT HAD BEEN DECREASED FROM 55 TO 45 MILES PER HOUR BUT IT DOES PROHIBIT INSTALLATION OF CAMERAS ON ROADWAYS IF THE SPEED LIMIT IS DROPPED DOWN TO 15 MPH.

HB 94 GIVES LOCAL JURISDICTIONS THE AUTHORITY TO BE AT THE FOREFRONT OF ENSURING TRAFFIC, PEDESTRIAN, AND BICYCLE SAFETY IN THEIR COMMUNITIES AND ULTIMATELY WILL SAVE LIVES.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONSIDERATION. I URGE A FAVORABLE REPORT.

Environment and Transportation Committee - HB 94 -

Uploaded by: Peter Gray

Position: FAV



Environment and Transportation Committee
Kumar Barve, Chair
Dana Stein, Vice-Chair

Room 251
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 94 - Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities

January 31, 2022

Mr. Chairman and members of the Committee, my name is Peter Gray and I represent the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. I am speaking on behalf of the 1500+ WABA members and several thousands of other supporters who live in Maryland.

WABA supports the passage of HB 94 and its enabling of all jurisdictions to lower speed limits on State Highways under certain conditions. Lowering speeds on roads is an essential element of reducing the incidence of crashes and the resultant fatalities and serious injuries stemming from such crashes. Furthermore, lower speeds in turn lessen the severity of injuries due to crashes.

In my role as co-chair of the Montgomery County Families for Safe Streets, I have helped organize and attend numerous memorials for people killed while walking or biking on State Highways. From those tragic memorials it is clear to me that the conditions of most State Highways are not safe for people walking and biking.

In addition, the most recent traffic fatalities on State Highways in my County have occurred at locations where other vulnerable road users have died in the past few years. In one case, two members of the same family were killed while crossing the same street, mere blocks from one another. It is clear that the speed of cars is a key factor in causing fatalities on our roads.

Overall, allowing local jurisdictions to lower speed limits on State Highways will give those localities an additional tool to reach Vision Zero goals by changing the conditions of the road,

and will reduce crashes and the severity of injuries from those crashes. We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 94.

HB 94_fav_AARP.pdf

Uploaded by: PRISCILLA KANIA

Position: FAV



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**HB 94 Vehicle Laws - Speed Limits – Establishment
FAVORABLE
House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 2, 2023**

Good afternoon Chair Barve and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee. I am Priscilla Kania, AARP Maryland volunteer lead advocate and resident of Anne Arundel County. AARP is the largest membership organization in Maryland representing those who are 50 and over. AARP Maryland has over 850,000 members. AARP Maryland supports HB 94 and we thank Delegates Lehman, Foley, Palakovich-Carr, and Terrasa for sponsoring this important legislation.

HB 94 expands (to apply statewide) the existing authorization for Montgomery County and municipalities within the county to decrease the maximum speed limit to no less than 15 miles per hour (MPH) on a highway after performing an engineering and traffic investigation. As with the current authorization, a locality is prohibited from implementing a new speed monitoring (i.e., speed camera) system to enforce speed limits on any portion of a highway for which the speed limit has been decreased pursuant to this authorization.

AARP Maryland believes every jurisdiction and Baltimore City should have the ability to change driving speeds. Everyone should feel safe crossing a street. But the streets can be dangerous, especially for older Americans. The number of pedestrians killed by vehicles rose 35 percent in the past decade—and the death rate is almost twice as high for people over 75 as for the general population. Making streets safe has been an important issue for AARP. AARP Maryland advocates for everyone, including pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and transit riders of all ages and abilities to have Safe Streets. Case in point, last week a 74 year-old bicyclist was killed in a hit and run right here in Anne Arundel County.

Walking and bicycling promote physical and mental health for all ages. Walking is the second most popular means of getting around (after driving.) Many communities are not designed to promote walking and bicycling. Residential areas are often far from commercial facilities. Sidewalks are often nonexistent or in poor condition. Crosswalk signals are often not timed for the slower pace of older pedestrians. Unsafe conditions for pedestrians are most pronounced in lower-income communities and communities of color. Older adults are also overrepresented in deaths involving people walking.

Communities are increasingly seeking to address road safety. AARP Maryland believes states should adopt and fully implement complete streets/safe streets policies to enable

safe access for users of all ages and abilities. This includes pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transit users.

AARP Maryland respectfully asks the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 94. If you have any questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan at tbresnahan@aarpm.org or by calling 410.302.8451.

HB94_MDSierraClub_fwa 2February2023.pdf

Uploaded by: Brian Ditzler

Position: FWA



P.O. Box 278
Riverdale, MD 20738

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB94 – “Vehicle Laws – Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities”

Position: Support with amendment

Hearing Date: February 2, 2023

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports HB94, which would authorize local authorities statewide to decrease the maximum speed limit to not less than 15 miles per hour after an engineering and traffic investigation determines that is a reasonable and safe maximum speed limit for that part of the state road.

The bill also specifies a local authority may not implement a new speed monitoring system to enforce speed limits on any portion of a highway for which the speed limit has been decreased to less than 25 miles per hour. The amendment we propose is to delete this provision of the bill for reasons we will discuss below.

HB94 is needed to enable local authorities to slow down drivers on state roads where conditions warrant a slower speed such as blind curves in the road, possibly children playing, or where a number of private homes or businesses are concentrated so there may be a lot of pedestrian traffic and vehicles entering and exiting the road.

We live in a car-centric culture where transportation planning, road infrastructure, and vehicle laws are largely focused on enabling cars and trucks to get to their destinations as swiftly as possible. Unfortunately, this has resulted in some drivers feeling they have priority on the road, and there are high rates of injury and death for pedestrians and bicyclists as well as vehicle drivers and passengers. The correlation between speed, road design, and crash severity is well documented. Combining excessive speed with poor roadway design can yield horrifying results. According to the MDOT Motor Vehicle Administration’s Highway Safety Office, there were 544 traffic fatalities in our state last year, including 139 pedestrian and bicycle deaths.

We propose deleting the provision of the bill that would prohibit implementing a new speed monitoring system because we believe speed monitoring systems are an effective way to force drivers to slow down. The rationale for enforcing a lowered speed limit with speed cameras is the same rationale for this bill being introduced. If an engineering and traffic investigation determines a reasonable and safe maximum speed limit is warranted along a section of state roadway, that speed limit needs to be followed and enforced to increase safety and lessen the possibility of a traffic accident where people may be injured or killed.

In summary, we believe HB94 as amended would allow local authorities to lower the speed limit where needed to increase safety. That would be a positive change, and we urge a favorable report on this bill.

Brian Ditzler
Chapter Transportation Chair
Brian.Ditzler@MDSierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America’s oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.

2023-HB0094-SpeedLimitReduction-FAV+AMENDMENTS.pdf

Uploaded by: Seth Grimes

Position: FWA

House Bill 0094
FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS
Vehicle Laws - Reduction of Speed Limits by Local Authorities
House of Delegates Environment and Transportation Committee
February 2, 2023

Submitted by Seth Grimes, Montgomery County, Maryland

Chair Barve and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

My name is Seth Grimes. I am a Montgomery County resident, a former Takoma Park City Council member, and a community advocate working on issues including pedestrian, bicyclist, and roadway safety.

I support HB94 with amendments that would apply only to Montgomery County.

HB94 would authorize local authorities statewide to decrease the maximum speed limit to not less than 15 miles per hour under certain conditions. §21-803(a)(4) applies only to Montgomery County and Montgomery County Municipalities. I ask you to amend HB94 to specify, in (a)(4)(ii), that the required engineering and traffic investigation may be conducted for a given class of street or highway, on an area- or jurisdiction-wide basis, without having to study each street/highway individually. I also ask you to strike (a)(4)(iii), a provision prohibiting use of new speed-monitoring systems.

It is well understood that lower speed limits mean safer streets for all. According to the Federal Highway Administration, “a driver traveling at 30 miles per hour who hits a pedestrian has a 45 percent chance of killing or seriously injuring them. At 20 miles per hour, that percentage drops to 5 percent. A number of cities across the United States, including New York, Washington, Seattle and Minneapolis, have reduced their local speed limits in recent years in an effort to reduce fatalities and serious injuries, with most having to secure State legislative authorization to do so.”

A 2011 technical report published by the AAA Foundation for Traffic Safety, Impact Speed and a Pedestrian’s Risk of Severe Injury or Death, found that the average risk of severe injury to a pedestrian increased with vehicle speed from 10% at 16 MPH, 25% at 23 MPH, 50% at 31 MPH, and higher at higher speeds.

Authorizing jurisdictions to lower maximum roadway speeds to 15 MPH would be a positive safety step.

§21-803(a)(4)(ii), applying only to Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities, states, “A local authority may decrease the maximum speed limit to not less than 15 miles per hour on a highway only after performing an engineering and traffic investigation.” An engineering and traffic investigation is an onerous requirement if applied on a street-by-street basis. A jurisdiction should be allowed to decrease speed limits on all streets of a certain type within a defined area, based on investigation that considers area

conditions without having to study each street/highway individually. Uniformity of speed limits throughout an area or jurisdiction would reduce driver confusion and likely boost speed-limit compliance.

Compare that effective July 1, 2020, the District of Columbia established a default speed limit of 20 mph for all local streets, residential streets that primarily serve neighborhood traffic. I ask that you enable Montgomery County and Montgomery County municipalities to make the same type of jurisdiction- or area-wide change.

Again, I ask you to remove the §21-803(a)(4)(iii) provision prohibiting implementation of new speed monitoring systems, in order to allow for such automated enforcement. Automated enforcement is proven to be an effective mechanism to get drivers to significantly lower their speeds.

I urge HB94 amendments applying only in Montgomery County and then a favorable committee report.

Thank you.

Seth Grimes
seth.grimes@gmail.com