



HB 519 – Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements

House Environment & Transportation Committee

February 16, 2023

Josh Feldmark

joshua@bikemd.org

Position: Support

My name is Joshua Feldmark and I write this as a representative of Bike Maryland. We represent cyclists of all abilities across the state, cyclists who ride 5 miles around the park with their families, for transportation, to a 100-mile ride. Bike Maryland has over 18,000 members from across the state. Additionally, we consistently organize or advocate on behalf of pedestrians and many other non-vehicle transportation users.

As you have probably noticed, I begin all our written testimony with the above paragraph. I do so, one because it was the intro our friend Kim Lamphier wrote for all her testimony on behalf of Bike Maryland, and to continually make clear that we are here to represent the interests of ALL cyclists.

This is most relevant to HB 519 because this is an issue most likely to impact kids on bikes, individuals who use their bike as transportation, and occasional recreational cyclists. Currently state law asserts that bikes are prohibited on sidewalks unless the local governing authority expressly allows it in law. This bill represents the opposite of current law by allowing bikes on sidewalks unless the local governing authority expressly prohibits it in law.

There are many locations in every jurisdiction in Maryland where sidewalks represent the safest and most efficient place for cyclists. Currently, in jurisdictions other than Howard, Frederick, and Montgomery County and the city of Annapolis, a child riding her bike to school on sidewalks is breaking the law. This can be easily fixed, is fiscally responsible, and will make everyone safer.

Bike Maryland fully supports HB 519 and urges a favorable report.