



# SB0645 – Great Maryland Trails Act of 2024

## Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

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### Position: Support

Greetings Chair and Members of the Committee

[Frederick Bicycle Coalition](#) represents a broad spectrum of recreational, commuter, mountain and adaptive cyclists. Our mission is to work with government, organizations, and individuals to promote increased and safe access for bicyclists and others in Frederick County. We have over 1,700 followers on Facebook.

We partner with advocacy organizations to promote vulnerable road user safety legislation and safe infrastructure on the state, county and municipal level. We know that the safest way to get more people biking, walking and using other active transportation modes is to provide safe infrastructure that is separated from vehicular traffic. Trails, also known as “shared-use paths” are used in urban, suburban and rural environments. But in order to get more people using them, especially for transportation, they must be connected in a safe network. There are a variety of local and regional trail networks in Maryland such as the Baltimore Greenway, Capital Trails Network and C&O Canal Towpath but there is no similar plan for the state that ties these together.

This bill would:

- Advance trails statewide used for both transportation, recreation and tourism
- Bring more federal grant money into Maryland for trail-building
- Strengthen local jurisdictions capacity to plan, design and construct trails
- Interconnect the existing and planned trails across Maryland

As bicycling has increased in popularity across the United States and provides many environmental, economic, and health benefits, there is a need for creating a safe transportation system which makes people the priority; using all available tools to help achieve zero injuries and fatalities on our active transportation network and allowing all people to get to their destinations safely.

#### Amendment

We recognize that this is a challenging fiscal year and support amending the bill so that it aligns with the resource capacity of participating agencies, especially in MDOT, DNR and MDP. We do not envision any transfer of positions but prefer collaboration among the agencies named in the bill.

Frederick Bicycle Coalition urges a FAVORABLE SB0645 committee report with amendment.