



Montgomery County's Advocates for Better Transportation

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February 13, 2024

SUPPORT for the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act

HB 337 and SB 126

We are writing to request your support for the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act (HB 337 and SB 0315). As ACT members and residents of Montgomery County, we are deeply concerned about both the disregard for road safety that led to Sarah Langenkamp's death in 2022, and the subsequent failure of the justice system to deliver a penalty proportionate to the harm inflicted on Ms. Langenkamp and her family. If Maryland is to achieve its stated goal of zero road deaths by 2030, there is an urgent need for stricter road safety laws to prevent the sort of reckless driving that led to Ms. Langenkamp's death.

According to the 2050 Bicycle & Pedestrian Master Plan, published last month, almost three quarters (74%) of Maryland residents surveyed feel unsafe cycling on roads due to concerns about traffic. Unfortunately, these fears are well-founded: approximately 650 people are injured and 10 killed on Maryland's roads every year in crashes involving bicycles. These crashes are disproportionately likely to cause serious injury to the cyclist: of all crashes involving a bicycle between 2018 and 2022, more than 85% resulted in an injury—more than three times the rate of injury crashes occurring statewide.

Sarah Langenkamp's death was not an isolated incident, and until more comprehensive action is taken to address the dangers faced by cyclists on Maryland's roads, we can expect this tragic pattern to continue. While the proposed legislation is a small step, it is necessary to ensure that those who fail to obey the rules of the road are held accountable for the consequences of their actions. We strongly urge you to vote yes on the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act (HB 337 and SB 0315).

Sincerely,

Michael Walken¹ and Richard Hoye
On Behalf of Action Committee for Transit

¹ I am a proud resident of Silver Spring, Maryland, having emigrated from the United Kingdom in 2018. While I was an avid cyclist before moving to the States—and despite being a car-free household—my wife and I currently do not cycle on Maryland's roads due to safety concerns. I became a member of the Action Committee for Transit in 2023 to support their advocacy for safer, more environmentally sustainable transportation options in Montgomery County.