

February 6, 2024

Hon. Marc Korman
House Environment & Transportation Committee
Maryland General Assembly

Re: Support for HB 156 Electric Bicycle Rebate & Voucher Program

Chair Korman and Members of the Committee:

Please accept this testimony on behalf of the Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG). CSG advocates for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all.

We wish to express our support for HB 156, which would create an electric bicycle rebate and voucher program. Below are some of the reasons why this bill should be supported.

E-bike rebate programs have been popular and successful across the US – Most daily trips that Marylanders make are within bikeable distances. Electric-assist bicycles, or e-bikes, can extend the reach of bikes to more people, more destinations, and more trips that are often done by car. Denver, Colorado’s nationally recognized e-bike rebate program in less than a year after it began, helped residents replace over 100,000 miles of car trips per week. The State of Colorado last year launched a popular statewide program.

Shifting car trips to biking and other modes is essential to meeting Maryland’s climate goals – Maryland’s *Climate Pollution Reduction Plan* finds that reducing vehicle miles traveled (VMT) is necessary for the state to meet its climate targets, even with its ambitious electric vehicle programs. MDOT has set a goal to reduce per capita VMT by 20%. Shifting short and medium-length trips to bicycle is one key strategy that has benefits for personal health, affordability, and congestion relief as well as reducing emissions.

Lower-income e-bike program participants benefit greatly – HB 156 rightly prioritizes the needs of low- and moderate-income residents, for whom e-bikes can improve access to jobs, services and educational opportunities. For example, a study last year showed that most of the Denver program’s rebate funds went to low-income residents, and that those lower-income participants used their purchased e-bikes 50% more than other program participants.

Lastly, e-bike rebates would use very little of Maryland’s limited transportation funds.

Due to these and many more reasons, we ask for a favorable report for HB 156 by the committee. Thank you for your consideration.



Coalition for Smarter Growth
DC • MD • VA

Page Two
Support for HB 156 by Coalition for Smarter Growth
Feb. 6, 2024

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Cheryl Cort', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cheryl Cort
Policy Director