



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 337 – Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, Members of Environment and Transportation –

On August 25, 2022, Sarah Debbink Langenkamp was struck and killed by the driver of a flatbed truck while riding her bike in a River Road bike lane in my District. A wife, mother, and diplomat who had just returned from the dangers in Ukraine, she was cycling home from an event at her children’s new elementary school in Bethesda when the fatal crash occurred. At the trial, the truck driver was sentenced to a fine of \$2,000 and 150 hours of community service, the maximum penalty allowed under current law. Sarah's husband, young children, parents, family, and friends were absolutely devastated by the sentence.

HB 337, the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act, addresses this injustice by imposing a stricter penalty on motorists who strike bicyclists. If convicted of causing a crash with a cyclist in a bike lane, a driver can receive a sentence of up to two months in jail and/or a fine of as much as \$2,000. The jail portion of the penalty aligns with current statute for hitting a pedestrian in a crosswalk (Transp. §21-502) and the fine portion aligns with the vulnerable road user statute (Transp. §21-901.3).

Unfortunately, the Langenkamps’ story is not unique. As Dan Langenkamp shared in a CNN interview, “I’ve tried to make sense of what happened to Sarah, and since I started looking into it, I’ve realized this is not a freakish accident... There’s an epidemic of traffic violence against people walking or biking.”¹ In Maryland alone, 2022 traffic crash data reveals 11 fatalities and 606 injuries involving cyclists.² With biking growing in popularity for health and environmental reasons, these numbers are likely to increase unless actions are taken.

By imposing stricter penalties, HB 337 sends the clear message that Maryland takes traffic crashes involving bicyclists seriously.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 337.

¹ <https://www.cnn.com/2022/11/19/us/sarah-langenkamp-ride-for-your-life-bike-safety/index.html>

² <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/resources/crashdata/>