



HB 511 – Vehicle Laws – Bicycles – Operation at Intersections

House Environment & Transportation Committee

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Josh Feldmark

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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.

There are a great many challenges to advocating for bikes and pedestrians in a society that for decades has had it ingrained into them that our road network is exclusively for cars. This gets much harder when we advocate for something that is counterintuitive to people who do not ride. It gets each harder than that when what we are advocating for is for cyclists to follow a different set of rules than automobiles.

All of that to say we here at Bike Maryland understand that this is a hard sell. All we can tell you is that the data says very clearly that a bike safety yield is, in fact, the safest way for cyclists to manage a stop sign. Overwhelmingly, drivers are trained and their brains are programmed to monitor for other automobiles and all too often they legitimately do not process the existence of a bicycle at the intersection. Therefore it is safest for the cyclist to gauge when it is safe to go and to spend as little time in the intersection as possible. This hopefully explains why a bike safety yield will be the safest option for Maryland roads.

Bike Maryland fully supports HB 511 and urges a favorable report.