



HB337 – Vehicle Laws - Bike Lanes and Shoulders - Yielding Right-of-Way (Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act)

House Environment & Transportation Committee

February 22, 2024

Position: Support

Greetings Chair and Members of the Committee

Our mission is to promote bicycling, increase safety, improve conditions, and provide a voice for bicyclists in Maryland. We partner with advocacy organizations to promote vulnerable road user safety legislation on the state and county level and work with government agencies, including police departments, to develop policy and awareness campaigns that protect the rights and well-being of bicyclists and pedestrians in Maryland.

We the undersigned represent multiple community-based organizations advocating for safe biking, walking and active transportation, submit this testimony on behalf of tens of thousands of members across the State of Maryland.

Sarah Debbink Langenkamp was crushed by a truck driver while legally cycling in a bike lane on River Road, Maryland State Road 190, in August 2022. The driver, Santos Reyes Martinez, pleaded guilty but received only token penalties for the highly negligent driving that took Sarah's life.

Penalties serve as a deterrent and as a motivator for education and driver vigilance, but only when they are adequate. Current Maryland penalties for hitting a bicyclist in a bike lane are not adequate. HB 337 seeks to impose penalties proportionate to the severity of the violent harm inflicted by a driver who hits a bicyclist in a bike lane. HB 337 will provide the deterrence and motivation that is currently lacking.

We urge the committee to support the passage of HB337.

Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BikeAAA), Bike Maryland, Bikemore, Bike HoCo, East Coast Greenway Alliance, Frederick Bicycle Coalition, Terps for Bike Lanes, Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), Worcester County Bike and Pedestrian Coalition