

February 13, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
251 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 628 – Highways – Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways  
– Construction and Reconstruction***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 628 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

HB 628 requires that the State Highway Administration (SHA) prioritize funding for the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways that are, or are adjacent to, highways that are subject to a Complete Streets policy or a similar Vision Zero program.

SHA’s Complete Streets goal is to prioritize safety for all road users and create a balanced and sustainable transportation system for Maryland residents. Through the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP), a part of the Complete Streets initiative, the SHA is implementing meaningful context driven planning and design work to transform twenty-three of our state’s most dangerous segments and make them safer for all road users. The improvements along these PSAP segments focus on pedestrian and bicyclist safety.

SHA’s current process for prioritizing sidewalks focuses on those in identified PSAP corridors. Improvements along PSAP corridors are data-driven and safety focused, with the goal of enhancing vulnerable user safety. Current projects include MD 650 and MD 410 in Prince George’s and Montgomery Counties. The SHA will continue using a data driven approach, prioritizing the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks based on engineering principles in areas identified as those with the greatest need for this infrastructure.

SHA seeks clarity on the provisions of HB 628 that require prioritization for sidewalk construction and reconstruction and how this should be interpreted relative to other safety priorities like state of good repair needs for pavement, bridges, and other infrastructure. The bill could be interpreted to require that SHA fund sidewalks ahead of other asset classes. If this were the case, HB 628 might prevent SHA from maintaining the safety of other asset classes or result in required road closures.

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Page Two

The Maryland Department of Transportation looks forward to working with the sponsor on this bill and respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 628.

Respectfully submitted,

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