

January 30, 2025

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

RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 7 – Vehicle Laws – Bicycles – Operation at Intersections

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 7 as an opportunity to enact a law that will improve convenience for bicyclists and safely promote bicycle usage.

HB 7 will make bicycling more convenient by permitting bicyclists approaching a stop sign at an intersection on certain highways to proceed through the intersection without stopping under certain circumstances. This type of operation is commonly referred to as “Stop-as-Yield” (SAY).

Alternatives to automobiles such as bicycles offer a less expensive, climate-friendly option for transportation. This bill acknowledges the unique characteristics of bicycling, which include heightened exertion while stopping and restarting the vehicle. As such, bicyclists prefer to maintain momentum while riding. Further, bicyclists benefit from an unobstructed field of vision while riding that helps them scan for and identify conflicts. These characteristics warrant some rules of the road that are specific to bicyclists. A law that recognizes these unique features will serve to promote bicycle usage and serve as a tangible sign of support for cycling.

Safety is MDOT’s top priority, and any change to the rules of the road must maintain safety for all users. SAY has been found to have safety benefits in other locations where adopted. A December 2024 study by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration of eight jurisdictions with SAY laws found such laws were associated with reduced crash rates, with reductions most prominent at suburban stop-controlled intersections like many of the highways affected by HB 7.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant House Bill 7 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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