

HB0628_FAV_City of Rockville_Hwys. - Sidewalks & B

Uploaded by: Adam Van Grack

Position: FAV



Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville
HB 628 – Highways – Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways – Construction and
Reconstruction
SUPPORT

Good afternoon, Chair Korman and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee. I am Rockville City Councilmember Adam Van Grack. Thank you for the opportunity to provide Rockville's testimony on HB 628. We thank Delegate Healey for sponsoring this important legislation.

The Rockville Mayor and Council unanimously support HB 628, which prioritizes funding for sidewalk construction and reconstruction on State roadways that are included in a complete streets policy or a local Vision Zero Plan and are not within areas that are both Priority Funding Areas and Sustainable Communities. HB 628 closely aligns with the goals of Rockville's Vision Zero program, which strives to eliminate all pedestrian, bicycle, rolling, and traffic crash related deaths.

It is essential that our residents are provided with safe and accessible sidewalks on State roads, especially in cities like Rockville that have an extensive transportation network. This is a matter of life and death for those who walk, bike, roll, and use transit. The legislation focuses on the most critical issues by prioritizing sidewalks identified as high injury network corridors, which are prone to serious injury and fatal crashes. Rockville will benefit from this legislation as we have two key sections of heavily traveled State roads that are covered under the bill:

- Sidewalk on MD 28 west of Rockville Town Center.
- Sidewalk on MD 355 at the north end of the King Farm neighborhood to College Parkway.

HB 628 takes a strategic and thoughtful approach to the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks on State roads. By prioritizing sidewalks included in complete streets or Vision Zero plans, HB 628 provides enhanced safety protections and access for those who walk, bike, roll, and use transit. For these reasons, we urge the Committee to provide HB 628 with a favorable report.

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Uploaded by: Alan K. Thompson

Position: FAV

TOWN OF RIVERDALE PARK

February 10, 2025

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

Re: Support of House Bill 628 Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Town of Riverdale Park supports House Bill 628 Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction. House Bill 628 would require the State Highway Administration to prioritize funding for the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways to sidewalks and bicycle pathways that are, or are adjacent to highways that are, subject to a complete streets policy or another similar Vision Zero program.

The Town of Riverdale Park is strongly committed to a transportation network that is safe, multi-modal, and provides convenient and equitable access to jobs, commercial and professional services, entertainment, and recreation for all residents in the community. Infrastructure that improves the safety of pedestrians, cyclists, and drivers is a critical component of the Town's Walk, Bike, Drive Safety initiative.

Thank you in advance for your consideration of this important legislation. If you require any additional information, please contact me at akthompson@riverdaleparkmd.gov.

Sincerely,



Alan K. Thompson
Mayor

CC: The Honorable Anne Healey, Delegate, District 22

Healey Sponsor Testimony - HB 628.pdf

Uploaded by: Anne Healey

Position: FAV

ANNE HEALEY
Legislative District 22
Prince George's County

Chair
Rules and Executive
Nominations Committee

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Chair
Local Government and
Bi-County Agencies Subcommittee



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Testimony in Support of HB 628 – Highways – Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways – Construction and Reconstruction February 11, 2025

Chair Korman and Colleagues of this committee,

For the record, I am Delegate Anne Healey, seeking a favorable report on HB 628.

This bill simply requires that the State Highway Administration prioritize funding for the construction or reconstruction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways that are adjacent to highways that are subject to complete streets policy or similar Vision Zero program. The purpose of this bill is to ensure the safety of our bicyclists and pedestrians by continuing to reach the goal of our Vision Zero programs, which is Zero Deaths in Maryland for drivers and passengers of motor vehicles, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

A complete streets policy provides information on how to design features that keep pedestrians and bicyclists safe in protected bicycle lanes and sidewalks, among other things, like crosswalks, share-the-road signage and pedestrian control signals. All of this is already in the law.

Our state's Vision Zero program plans and develops a State roadway system that has zero vehicle-related deaths or serious injuries. The goal is to have Zero deaths by 2030.

Citizens rely on walking and bicycling as alternative modes of transportation for health, the environment, and sometimes for necessity. The issue of keeping sidewalks and pathways well-maintained is not new and is necessary to meet our goal of zero deaths.

This bill simply prioritizes funding for the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks that are adjacent to highways that are subject to a complete streets policy and vision zero program.

So, I ask for a favorable report of HB 628.

2.13.25 Hwys-Sidewalks ^0 Bicycle Path.Cons't^0Rec

Uploaded by: Bee Ditzler

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION
COMMITTEE**

**HB 628 Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and
Reconstruction**

POSITION: Support

BY: Linda Kohn, LWVMD President

Date: February 13, 2025

The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) agrees that HB 628 should be made law to create another leg to support Vision Zero and the safety of all. LWVMD supports achieving and maintaining working relationships among entities responsible for transportation and decreasing the use of single occupancy motorized vehicles is evident. This bill clearly promotes incentives of alternative methods (walking and biking) of transportation other than motorized vehicles.

History of the construction of pathways and sidewalks shows that in well-defined urban entities there are options for travel without a motorized vehicle, but for most urban highways a motorized vehicle is required. The lack of sidewalks and pathways either during construction or reconstruction of highways mandates the use of motorized vehicles. This bill requires the State Highway Administration to prioritize funding for construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways to areas that are adjacent to highways that are subject to a complete streets policy or a Vision Zero Program.

LWVMD is very concerned about the health and safety of all residents. This health and safety concern is both through pollution of the air through exhaust and tire wear that motorized vehicles provide as well as being hit by walking or biking along a designated highway with no alternative to avoid motorized traffic.

HB 628 provides assurances and safety for residents and **LWVMD urges a favorable report on HB 628.**

Behrend HB 628 Favorable.pdf

Uploaded by: Dan Behrend

Position: FAV

February 11, 2025

Maryland House of Delegates
Environment and Transportation Committee
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: **HB 628 – Favorable**

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Committee Members,

I am a resident of District 22 in Prince George’s County. I volunteer with several organizations working to make Maryland streets safer, including Bike Maryland and Friends of the Greenbelt East Trail. I strongly support **HB 628**. I urge the committee to report **favorable** on the bill.

HB 628 prioritizes building and reconstructing sidewalks and bicycle pathways that are, or along streets that are, subject to a Complete Streets Policy or a Vision Zero Policy.

This bill is consistent with, and supports, the Maryland Department of Transportation’s (MDOT’s) recently updated Complete Streets Policy, the State’s policy to design and build streets that are safe for all road users, regardless of their mode of travel.ⁱ It also supports Maryland’s commitment to Vision Zero, a goal to eliminate crashes that result in serious injury or death.ⁱⁱ

Designing and building sidewalks and bike paths along state roads is consistent with MDOT’s mission and commitment to promote a safe transportation system that supports all types of users, including people walking, biking, and rolling. In recent strategic plans, MDOT has noted the need to update its policies related to bike lanes and sidewalks; and, MDOT has been undertaking those updates. This bill will support that work.

[Maryland’s Climate Pollution Reduction Plan \(Dec. 2023\)](#)ⁱⁱⁱ, [MDOT’s The Playbook \(i.e., the 2050 Maryland Transportation Plan\) \(Jan. 2024\)](#),^{iv} and MDOT’s [2050 Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan \(Jan. 2024\)](#)^v all note the need to update SHA policies around active transportation (*i.e.*, walking and biking). The plans also note the need, and set goals, to enhance safety, serve communities, and support the economy, by increasing active transportation, including filling gaps in active transportation networks (*i.e.*, building more sidewalks and bike paths).

Again, HB 628 prioritizes constructing and reconstructing sidewalks and bicycle pathways where they are needed most, and supports MDOT’s Complete Streets Policy and Vision Zero.

I strongly **support HB 628** and urge the committee to report **favorable** on the bill.

Thank you,

Dan Behrend
Riverdale Park, MD
Prince George’s County

ⁱMDOT Policy Manual – MDOT 750 Complete Streets

https://policymanual.mdot.maryland.gov/mediawiki/index.php?title=MDOT_750_Complete_Streets

ⁱⁱ “Maryland Transportation Secretary Wiedefeld Charts Course Toward Goal of Zero Highway Deaths”

<https://www.mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/newsroomdetails.aspx?newsId=692&PageId=38>

ⁱⁱⁱ See page 14 (“MDOT will ramp up investments and policies to accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians routinely and safely on our extensive road network by retrofitting streets with bike lanes, sidewalks, and traffic calming measures.”). Available at:

<https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/air/ClimateChange/Pages/Maryland's-Climate-Pollution-Reduction-Plan.aspx>

^{iv} See e.g., pages 35 & 38. Available at: <https://www.mdot.maryland.gov/tso/pages/Index.aspx?PageId=22>

^v See page 47 https://www.mdot.maryland.gov/OPCP/MDOT_State_Bike_Ped_Master_Plan_FULL_FINAL_VERSION.pdf

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Uploaded by: Laura Hale

Position: FAV



February 11, 2025

Testimony of Laura Hale
American Heart Association

Favorable HB 628 Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Honorable Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today. My name is Laura Hale and I am the Director of Government Relations for the American Heart Association. The American Heart Association offers our strong support HB 628 Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction.

We want to see projects launched and completed in a timely fashion, so we can keep making progress to achieve our shared vision of a more walkable, bikeable and accessible for all of our residents. Prioritizing communities with Complete Streets Plans will do just that.

The COVID-19 pandemic has underscored and amplified the importance of investing in public health infrastructure. Many of us are now relying on safe and accessible sidewalks, bike lanes, paths and crosswalks now more than ever for physical activity, a mental reprieve from isolation and for essential workers to get to their jobs.

We now have an opportunity to recommit ourselves to our public health by ensuring everyone in Maryland has access to physical activity, which helps fight chronic disease. Doing so will ensure residents of all ages can maintain good health and access to essential services. Especially with ridership of public transportation down, we must ensure that our streets, sidewalks, paths and crosswalks are safe and accessible for everyone.

We urge a favorable report on this important piece of legislation.

SB628 HighwaysSidewalksBicyclesPathways.FAV.02.11.

Uploaded by: PRISCILLA KANIA

Position: FAV



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HB 628 Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction
House Environmental and Transportation Committee
February 11, 2025
FAVORABLE

Good afternoon, Chair Korman and Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, my name is Priscilla Kania, and I am a Volunteer with AARP Maryland, representing our nearly 850,000 members statewide. On behalf of AARP, thank you for the opportunity to testify in strong support of **HB 628: Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction**. This important legislation directly aligns with AARP's Livable Communities initiative, which supports the development of communities where people of all ages can live safely, independently, and comfortably as they age. We thank Delegate Healey for sponsoring this critical legislation.

HB 628 requires the Maryland State Highway Administration to prioritize funding for the construction and reconstruction of sidewalks and bicycle pathways, particularly those adjacent to highways covered by Complete Streets policies or programs like Vision Zero. This measure is essential to ensuring that aging Marylanders can remain active, mobile, and connected to their communities.

Aging in Place: A Growing Necessity

As Maryland's population ages, ensuring safe and accessible infrastructure is crucial to allowing older residents to age in place. According to AARP research, nearly **90% of older adults** want to remain in their homes and communities as they age. However, this goal is only achievable if they have access to safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure that meets their mobility needs. For older Marylanders, sidewalks and bike pathways are not just recreational amenities—they are lifelines that enable them to walk to the grocery store, visit their doctor, attend social events, and stay physically active. Accessible pathways reduce isolation and increase independence while improving physical and mental health.

The Link Between Safe Infrastructure and Healthy Aging

Accessible and well-maintained sidewalks and pathways are critical to preventing injuries, promoting active lifestyles, and improving quality of life for older adults. AARP's Livable Communities framework emphasizes the role of safe, walkable communities in reducing health risks such as:

- **Falls and injuries:** Uneven or poorly maintained sidewalks pose serious risks to older pedestrians.
- **Isolation and loneliness:** Lack of accessible pathways can lead to social isolation, which has been linked to negative health outcomes, including depression and cognitive decline.
- **Reduced physical activity:** Limited safe walking and biking options can discourage

older residents from engaging in the physical activity they need to maintain their health. By prioritizing funding for complete and connected sidewalks and bike pathways, **HB 628** directly addresses these challenges and fosters an environment where residents of all ages can thrive.

Complete Streets and Vision Zero: Safer Streets for All

Complete Streets and Vision Zero programs aim to design transportation networks that prioritize safety and accessibility for all users—whether they are pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, or drivers. By requiring the State Highway Administration to prioritize projects within these frameworks, **HB 628** ensures that future investments reflect a commitment to equity, safety, and long-term community sustainability.

Economic and Community Benefits

Investing in sidewalks and bicycle pathways doesn't just benefit individual residents—it strengthens entire communities by:

- **Increasing property values:** Walkable neighborhoods are highly desirable and can boost local property values.
- **Boosting local economies:** Safe, pedestrian-friendly areas attract more foot traffic to local businesses.
- **Reducing healthcare costs:** Encouraging physical activity through walkable communities can reduce the incidence of chronic diseases and associated healthcare costs.

HB 628 Supports Multigenerational Communities

Prioritizing infrastructure that promotes walking and biking benefits not only older adults but residents of all ages, including children, families, and individuals with disabilities. A truly livable community is one where everyone can navigate their environment safely and confidently. By passing **HB 628**, Maryland can take an important step toward ensuring that our infrastructure reflects the needs of a growing aging population and promotes healthy, connected communities.

AARP's Request

We respectfully urge the Committee to issue a **favorable report on HB 628** to help build safer, more accessible communities and support aging Marylanders in their desire to age in place.

Thank you for considering our testimony. For further questions, please contact Tammy Bresnahan, Senior Director of Advocacy of AARP Maryland at tbresnahan@aarp.org or at 410-302-8451. **Thank you!**

Takoma Park 2025 - HB 628 FAV - Safe Sidewalks - H

Uploaded by: Talisha Searcy

Position: FAV



CITY TAKOMA OF PARK MARYLAND

Support House Bill 628 – Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction

House Environment and Transportation Committee

February 13, 2025

The City of Takoma Park supports and urges favorable consideration of House Bill 628, which will ensure that pedestrians and cyclists are safer along urban highways in municipalities.

The City of Takoma Park is home to several stretches of urban highways maintained by the State Highway Administration (SHA); for example, MD-650 (New Hampshire Avenue) and MD-410 (Philadelphia Avenue/Ethan Allen Avenue). As major thoroughfares connecting Washington DC to Maryland, these highways have a high number of vehicles as well as pedestrians and cyclists. HB 628 ensures that the SHA provides vital sidewalk and bike lane infrastructure along these roads.

Making sure all residents can use these roads safely is of utmost importance, but the cost to construct and maintain sidewalks and bike paths on these roads is a significant financial burden, especially for small municipalities. Within the City's boundaries, we pay for the maintenance of all local roads as well as their adjacent sidewalks and bike paths. Moreover, the City pays for modifications necessary to ensure that sidewalks along state roads comply with the Americans with Disability Act (ADA). The State should take responsibility for the design, construction, and maintenance costs of sidewalk and bike paths along state roads.

HB 628 supports the City's Vision Zero goal to create a safer community for all residents, including pedestrians, bicyclists, and drivers. This is why the City of Takoma Park supports HB 628 and urges a favorable committee vote.

HB0628-ET_MACo_LOI.pdf

Uploaded by: Dominic Butchko

Position: INFO



House Bill 628

Highways - Sidewalks and Bicycle Pathways - Construction and Reconstruction

MACo Position:

To: Environment and Transportation Committee

LETTER OF INFORMATION

Date: February 13, 2025

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) submits this **LETTER OF INFORMATION** on HB 628. The bill would give counties that have vision zero programs priority in receiving state funds or program support for sidewalks and bicycle pathways.

The State Highway Administration is a major actor with the construction and maintenance of major state arteries. However, in many cases, the State fails to follow through and maintain the auxiliary components of sensible roadway planning, including bicycle lanes and sidewalks. HB 628 is designed to further encourage the State to fulfill its reasonable responsibility – especially since local governments have been denied fair transportation funding for over 15 years.

Local governments in Maryland own and maintain roughly 5 of every 6 road miles across the state. Counties maintain the bulk of this infrastructure, whether it be in urban areas found within the greater Baltimore-Washington region, or in the rural sections of Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore. “Great Recession” era cuts to highway user revenues (the share of state transportation revenues sent for local roadway maintenance) have left local transportation infrastructure far underfunded for the last 15 years. As this committee debates the prioritization of sidewalk and bicycle pathway funding, counties urge that properly aligning the burdens of repair and maintenance of sidewalks and bicycle pathways along state highways is also reconsidered.

Proper care of the roadway should include its full scope, from the surface itself, to underground conduits, to amenities like bicycle lanes and sidewalks. MACo thanks the committee for the opportunity to submit this letter of information on HB 628, and stands ready to provide more information, if needed.

HB0628 - SHA - LOI - Highways - Sidewalks and Bicy

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

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,

April King
Director of Government Affairs
State Highway Administration
410-210-5780

Matthew Mickler
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090