

20 January 2025

Senator Salling
11 Bladen St #416
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: State Bill 14 - Electric Bicycles - Certification of Title, Registration, and Insurance

Dear Senator Salling,

My name is Miller Nuttle, and I'm a Policy Director at Lyft Urban Solutions. We operate the public bikeshare program, Capital Bikeshare, that serves Metro Washington, D.C., including Montgomery County and Prince George's County in Maryland. In 2024, Capital Bikeshare delivered more than 6 million rides, of which over 55% were taken on pedal-assist ebikes.

Ebike ridership has accelerated bikeshare adoption in cities around the world in recent years and Capital Bikeshare is no exception. From 2023 to 2024, ebike ridership grew over 142% in Capital Bikeshare. The previous year saw a 169% growth in ebike rides. This triple digit year over year growth in ridership is the highest growth rate of any bikeshare system in the United States.

I'm here today to register our opposition to SB14, which would impose registration, licensure, and insurance requirements on ebikes in Maryland. Given the incredible success and growth of ebikes in the Capital Bikeshare program, this bill would have a profound impact in curtailing ebike ridership momentum.

Lyft prioritizes safety in every aspect of our ebike design and operation. We adhere to rigorous testing protocols that exceed current industry standards, focusing on structural integrity and electronic reliability. Our ebikes are equipped with advanced safety features, including LED lighting for visibility and smart technology that monitors all aspects of the battery and bike's health in real-time.

The registration requirements in this bill present a massive logistical burden to our operations. It's not clear whether ebikes would be required to display some proof of registration, but assuming they do, we would have to create a duplicative licensing system (our bikes already have unique IDs on them). That means having reserves of every potential license number, and then matching a specific number to the underlying existing bike ID - an operational lift that will distract our operations team from delivering the best service they can. Moreover, Capital Bikeshare bikes cycle into and out of all 8 Member Jurisdictions in the program, so the bill also presents interstate commerce challenges that would have to be negotiated with Washington, DC and other jurisdictions.

It's impossible to quantify exactly what the insurance policy required by this bill would cost, but estimates for similar policies anticipate as much as tripling the insurance costs for each ebike ride taken. These costs would either have to be borne by the county owners of the program in Montgomery County and Prince George's County, or passed through to customers. That means that residents in those counties would be



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paying drastically more to access the program than their neighbors in Washington, D.C. or Virginia. This would be particularly damaging for members of our income-eligible Reduced Fare Bikeshare program. Income-eligible members use ebikes at a disproportionately high rate, nearly 95% of trips, and often rely on ebikes as an affordable alternative to owning a car.

Bikeshare is an integral part of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties' efforts to improve street safety and encourage more sustainable transportation. Please do not pass a bill that would hamper our municipal partners' ability to continue service in these counties, and undermine the proven safety in numbers effect for everyone who shares our streets.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Miller Nuttle".

Miller Nuttle

Director, Transit and Micromobility Policy, Lyft