



February 11, 2025

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401 - 1991

SUPPORT: SB0627 - Bicycles - Operation at Intersections

Bikemore, Baltimore City's livable streets advocacy organization representing more than 8,000 advocates and the 30% of Baltimoreans who lack access to a car, is writing in support of SB0627.

This legislation would permit bicyclists to treat a stop sign as a yield sign if no drivers or pedestrians are approaching the intersection with the right-of-way. Known as the "Bicycle Safety Yield" or "Stop As Yield," this legislation is adopted in 11 states, including neighboring jurisdictions of Delaware and The District of Columbia. It makes sense to bring our laws in line with Delaware and The District of Columbia, because many recreational and commuting bicyclists are crossing these borders daily, especially from the suburbs into the District and from Ocean City into the Delaware beaches.

This legislation also promotes safety. In practice, maintaining forward momentum on a bicycle allows the rider to look both ways easier. We've demonstrated this perhaps counterintuitive fact in a [short video](#) that we produced for last year's legislation. Data supports the above anecdotal experience. In Delaware, reported crashes involving bicycles at intersections fell by 23% in the immediate years after adoption. In December, NHTSA issued a research report on Stop as Yield laws, including a "systematic review and empirical analysis to determine their effects on bicyclist safety behaviors." The research team found these laws were associated with reduced crash rates, and that they do not impact reckless behavior of bicyclists, suggesting that adopting Stop As Yield does not lead to bicyclists disregarding other traffic laws.

Finally, we must consider disparities in enforcement. Charles Brown's 2013 report *Arrested Mobility* explores traffic violations and other laws that frequently result in racially disparate enforcement, leading to reduced rates of walking, biking, and e-scooter use in Black communities. As an organization representing a majority Black city, where majority usage of some of our largest separated bike facilities is also majority Black and low-income, we must consider adjusting laws to reduce disparities, especially when changing those laws reflects natural and safer human behavior.

We encourage the committee to support SB0627 and improve safety for bicyclists in Maryland.

Sincerely,

Jed Weeks
Executive Director