

February 11, 2025

SB0627: Vehicle Laws - Bicycles - Operation at Intersections

To Chair Smith and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I support SB0627, which allows people riding bicycles the ability to make a conscious decision to slow down, look around, and proceed across an intersection without full stopping.

Just as pedestrians do not need to stop to see and hear if a car is coming before crossing a crosswalk, bicyclists are always looking around and listening for vehicles approaching from behind or from any cross traffic and they are generally aware of their surroundings. Furthermore, bicyclists that are riding on the road are often planning their next move in order to keep themselves safe and alive, by looking behind and around them for vehicles that may not have seen them as they pass a driveway, for example.

By enhancing bicyclists' toolset with the ability to make a decision as one approaches the intersection, they more than likely will be able to clear intersections more quickly rather than the extended time it takes when starting from a standstill. Just like a pedestrian at a crosswalk, a bicyclist will only use this toolset if good site lines exist on the approach to the intersection and after reviewing traffic in all directions. These enhancements statistically show improvements to bicyclists safety in other states already.

I urge you to pass this bill out of committee so that it can be brought to the Senate floor for a vote. This bill has the potential to improve the lives of countless Marylanders who rely on bicycles as a mode of transportation.

Sincerely,

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