

ARTHUR ELLIS, CPA
Legislative District 28
Charles County

DEPUTY MAJORITY LEADER

Finance Committee

Vice Chair, Rules Committee

Senate Chair

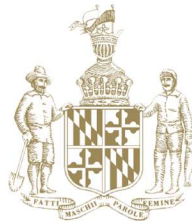
Joint Committee on the
Management of Public Funds

Senate Chair

Joint Committee on
Workers' Compensation Benefit and
Insurance Oversight

Senate Chair, Charles County Delegation

Chair, Select Committee Southern
Maryland



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
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Sponsor Written Testimony: Favorable

Senate Bill 0071: Education – Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission – Establishment

February 2, 2026

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and esteemed members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

I am writing to express my strong support for Senate Bill 71, which would establish the Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission to identify, coordinate, and secure funding for safe pathways for students traveling to and from school.

Students who do not qualify for transportation to and from school are required to walk; however, there is a lack of safe sidewalks and crosswalks for students to travel on. In Montgomery County, elementary and middle school students reported lack of sidewalks and crosswalks, excessive traffic speeds, and poor lighting. All of these conditions foster an unsafe environment for pedestrians to travel on, particularly students (Montgomery County of Transportation, 2025). This bill would establish the Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission. The purpose of this commission is to guarantee that students are provided with a safe path to travel to school. The commission would conduct an inventory of the current safe pathways and identify what areas do not have safe pathways included. After identifying which communities are lacking safe sidewalks or crosswalks, the commission would develop strategic plans to secure funding and make the needed recommendations to local governments and state agencies to improve the environment for students. Throughout this process, the commission would include input from students, parents, and other stakeholders.

A significant number of students traveling to and from school are dependent on safe pathways. Students, parents, and other stakeholders are extremely disappointed in the

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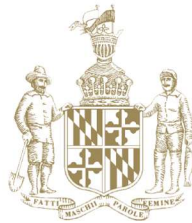
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unsafe circumstances these children are in (Montgomery County of Transportation, 2025). The Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission would identify safe sidewalks or work to create them if they do not already exist. This commission would guarantee safer travel for all pedestrians, especially students.

I request a favorable report on Senate Bill 0071. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Arthur Ellis".

Arthur Ellis, CPA

References

Montgomery County Department of Transportation. (2025). *Safe Routes to School FY24 Glen Haven Elementary School safety audit* (Walkability Study). Montgomery County Government. https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/DOI-PedSafety/Resources/Files/Safe_Routes_to_School/WalkabilityStudy/Reports/SRTS_FY24_GlenHaven_ES_SafetyAudit.pdf