



Committee: Environment and Transportation

**Testimony on: HB 381, State Highway Administration - Urban Core and Urban Center
Traffic Control Devices - No Turn on Red**

Position: Support

Hearing Date: February 12, 2026

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report on HB 381. This bill would require the State Highway Administration (SHA) to install traffic control devices prohibiting right turns on a steady red signal at intersections on state highways in urban cores and centers.

Some of Maryland's most dangerous roadways are state highways. Forty-two percent of fatal pedestrian crashes occurred on state highways between 2019 and 2023, despite state roads only making up about 16% of roadways in the state.¹ Unfortunately, both pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities are increasing, rising 35% and 37% respectively from 2010 to 2020.²

Right turns during red signals increase conflict between drivers and pedestrians, leading to increased traffic injuries and fatalities. Research from the U.S. National Highway Traffic Safety Administration found that permitting red-turn-on-red led to a 43% to 107% rise in pedestrian crashes.³ In 2022, Washington, D.C. similarly found that no-turn-on-red restrictions led to a 92% decline in the number of drivers that failed to yield to pedestrians and a 97% drop in vehicle conflicts, all with minor impacts to traffic operations.⁴

Additionally, right-turn-on-red became widespread decades prior to modern SUVs and trucks, which are "larger, heavier, and have taller hoods and higher front blind zones, often obscuring anything within 10–15 feet ahead" and are overrepresented in right-turn crashed compared to smaller vehicles.⁵ These conditions are why decision makers across the country have banned red-turn-on-red in urban areas.

To create a more sustainable transportation system, people must be safe to walk or use other mobility devices. For these reasons, the Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club urges a favorable report on HB 381.

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<https://ggwash.org/view/96778/maryland-state-roads-are-dangerous-in-rockville-other-cities-new-policies-could-help>

² SHA Pedestrian Safety Action Plan

³ <https://www.smartcitiesdive.com/news/right-turn-on-red-ban-pedestrian-safety-effective-research/728750/>

⁴ <https://tooledesign.com/insights/2025/09/right-turn-on-red-its-time-to-reconsider/>

⁵ <https://tooledesign.com/insights/2025/09/right-turn-on-red-its-time-to-reconsider/>

Founded in 1892, the Sierra Club is America's oldest and largest grassroots environmental organization. The Maryland Chapter has over 70,000 members and supporters, and the Sierra Club nationwide has over 800,000 members and nearly four million supporters.