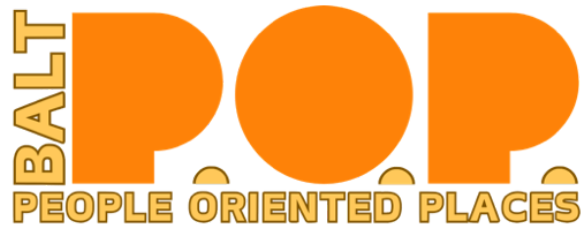


Bill: HB1381

Bill Title: Vehicle Laws - Stopping, Standing, or Parking in a Bike Lane or Bicycle Path - Prohibition

Position: **Favorable with Amendments**



Members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee,

As a group that advocates for transportation options which contribute to the liveability, productivity, and overall appeal of our communities comprising the Baltimore region, we support HB1381.

All across Maryland, for a host of reasons, municipalities are building bicycle infrastructure. In order for that infrastructure to be put to robust use by people riding bicycles, its purpose as a safe right-of-way for them needs to be respected. One aspect of accomplishing that is to make it clear that bike lanes and paths are not to be dangerously used as free or temporary parking for delivery and other non-emergency vehicles.

Maryland state law already puts this same protection in place for roadways, intersections, sidewalks, crosswalks, etc. The purpose - safety. Given that bicycle infrastructure is frequently placed adjacent to flowing automobile traffic, extending this protection to bike lanes and paths makes abundant sense. An automobile blocking a bike lane or path presents an unexpected and dangerous obstruction for bicyclists traveling at-speed. Furthermore, the obstruction may force the bicyclist into an adjacent vehicle travel lane mid-block - an unexpected and dangerous spot for a bicyclist to enter traffic.

Baltimore City, Washington, D.C., and the state of Virginia already have equivalent restrictions in place for their bicycle infrastructure.

This bill does nothing to impinge on the exemption provided to emergency vehicles - or directions provided by a police officer or traffic control device.

This is a no-cost, common sense measure that serves as another step toward encouraging active transportation and complete streets initiatives being pursued across the state. That said, we urge you to remove the exception provided for vehicles while loading or unloading goods for pick up or delivery. We do not allow for this exception in the pedestrian right-of-way (sidewalks), nor do we allow for this exception in the automobile right-of-way (automobile lanes), so we do not see why it should exist for the bicycle right-of-lane (bike lanes).

Additionally, roadway engineers account for state vehicle laws when designing infrastructure. By allowing delivery vehicles to park in bike lanes, engineers and planners will not take the time or effort to plan for vehicle loading/unloading zones.

If we want to move active transportation beyond fetish status and, instead, legitimize and support it as a mainstream form of travel, we need to treat it with the same respect we give automobile-based transportation.

If removing this exception is deemed unacceptable, we would like to see the text of the bill reworded such that it is clear and obvious that the exceptions list does **not** supersede any laws enacted by local jurisdictions.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote in favor of HB1381, with our suggested amendments**. Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to testify on this legislation.

[BaltPOP - Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places](#)