

Testimony on HB1491 – Favorable

Education - Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission - Establishment

Environment and Transportation Committee – March 12, 2026

Environment and Transportation Committee and Members of the Maryland General Assembly,

I submit testimony as a former 5-term PTO president and longtime Safe Routes to School advocate to express **strong support of HB1491 – establishing an Interjurisdictional Safe Pathways Commission – and to request a FAVORABLE report from the committee.**

Last year, a [student was tragically killed in Montgomery County. In November 2023, two students were struck and killed walking to school in Prince George’s County.](#) Sadly, these were not isolated events. [The past decade has seen far too many school-related pedestrian safety incidents throughout Maryland.](#) And for every death or injury that makes the news, parents across Maryland [have countless examples of close calls where another tragedy was a split second or near-miss away.](#) Our kids can’t afford for us to wait until the next tragedy to take action on this issue.

I have seen firsthand how establishing a commission like HB1491 proposes can have a positive impact. After two students were killed in 2023, Prince George’s County Council established a School Pedestrian Safety Workgroup that met regularly for six months to [create a report with 18 detailed recommendations](#) to improve safety around our schools. The group brought together county and municipal leaders, school officials, public works and transportation officials, law enforcement, parents, and other key stakeholders. Our work was intended as a model for other counties and LEAs to adapt and adopt, and establishing a Safe Pathways commission statewide will help develop more solutions that keep Maryland students safe and create safer streets for all residents.

One additional insight to share: last year, Prince George’s County Public Schools hired two Safe Passage coordinators who have made an immediate impact and performed more than 100 safety assessments around the county so far. This relatively small investment in an LEA with 20,000+ employees has significantly elevated Safe Passage as a top priority and demonstrates how any additional focus on this issue can lead to measurable progress.

Every child has the right to get to and from school safely – and I thank Delegate Odom and all the co-sponsors of this legislation for raising awareness of this important issue. I respectfully urge a FAVORABLE report on HB1491.

Timothy Meyer

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