

# **HB\_1567\_Sponsor Testimony\_Odom**

Uploaded by: Darrell Odom

Position: FAV



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1567: Vehicle Laws – Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs – Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act) Support

House Environment and Transportation Committee  
March 12, 2026

Testimony of Delegate Odom

Thank you, Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1567, the **Pass Pedestrians Safely Act**.

As Maryland continues to expand multimodal transportation options, it is increasingly important that our laws clearly define safe behavior for all users of shared roads, trails, and more. HB 1567 prioritizes pedestrian safety by requiring riders of bicycles, motor scooters, and electric personal assistive mobility devices (EPAMDs) to maintain, when practicable, a clear 3-foot safe passing distance when overtaking pedestrians or vehicles. Clear expectations like this help prevent collisions and encourage safer interactions between pedestrians and riders on sidewalks, trails, shared-use paths, and other scenarios where applicable. As e-bikes are classified as bicycles under Maryland law, regulations under this bill do apply to riders of e-bikes.

Under current state law, micromobility users are not required to provide an audible warning when passing pedestrians. HB 1567 fills this gap, where riders will be required to provide any audible signal, whether the signal is by voice, bell, or another audible device. This step ensures that pedestrians are aware of approaching riders and have the opportunity to react appropriately. Many responsible riders already practice this courtesy, and this bill helps standardize that behavior statewide.

Importantly, the legislation also clarifies equipment standards for EPAMDs, allowing them to be equipped with bells, horns, or other audible signaling devices while prohibiting sirens or whistles. This ensures that riders have the tools necessary to safely alert pedestrians.

The bill further strikes an appropriate balance in enforcement by establishing violations as a secondary offense with a modest \$25 civil penalty, reinforcing safety expectations while avoiding overly punitive enforcement. To clarify, police may not pull a rider over for any violation pertaining to this bill. A fine would only apply after a rider has already been pulled over legally. The bill is simple: It highlights that pedestrian protection matters.

Together, these provisions aim to promote predictable, courteous behavior on shared transportation infrastructure, reduce the risk of pedestrian injuries, and help align Maryland's laws with the realities of modern micromobility.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to give **HB 1567 a favorable report.**

# **Testimony in support of HB1567 - Pass Pedestrians**

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

HB1567\_RichardKaplowitz\_FAV  
03/12/2026  
Richard Keith Kaplowitz  
Frederick, MD 21703

**TESTIMONY ON HB#1567 – FAVORABLE**

**Vehicle Laws - Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs - Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)**

**TO:** Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee

**FROM:** Richard Keith Kaplowitz

**My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of HB#1567, Vehicle Laws - Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs - Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)**

Price Benowitz Accident Injury Lawyers discuss the issue of *Safety and Preventative Measures for Pedestrian Accidents in Maryland* on their website. <sup>1</sup>

Vehicle operators must pay full attention to their driving and be on the lookout for pedestrians. In 2008 national statistics showed that alcohol was involved either for the driver or the pedestrian in 48% of all pedestrian accidents. Visibility of pedestrians is also much harder at nighttime. Vehicles must be operated with headlights on at dusk and thereafter so that the vehicle driver can see pedestrians and pedestrians can see the vehicle. Vehicle operators must operate their vehicles at the posted speed for the safety of themselves, other motorists, and pedestrians.

Pedestrians have a reasonable expectation that motorists will be operating their vehicles at the posted speed and rely on that so they can gauge distance and timing to cross. Prevalent today are drivers who do not obey the motor vehicle laws texting and talking on cellphones while driving. This distraction of the driver can be lethal and remains a leading cause of crashes.

Maryland has strong pedestrian safety laws now, but this bill will strengthen those laws.

This bill will require an operator of a bicycle, a motor scooter, or an EPAMD to exercise due care to avoid a collision with another vehicle or a pedestrian and maintain, if practicable, a safe distance of at least 3 feet when passing a vehicle or pedestrian; requires an operator of a bicycle, a motor scooter, or an EPAMD to give an audible warning by voice or device before passing a pedestrian; establishes that a violation of the distance or audible warning requirements is a secondary offense subject to a civil penalty of \$25; etc.

**I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass HB1567.**

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://pricebenowitz.com/maryland-injury/pedestrian-accident-lawyer/safety-measures/>

**HB1567\_FWA\_City of Rockville\_Veh. Laws - Bicycles,**

Uploaded by: Christine Krone

Position: FWA



**Testimony of the Mayor and Council of Rockville  
HB 1567 – Vehicle Laws – Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs –  
Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)  
SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

The Mayor and Council of Rockville are thankful to Chair Korman and members of the House Environment and Transportation Committee for the opportunity to provide support with amendments comments on HB 1567. We thank Delegate Odom for sponsoring this important legislation.

The Mayor and Council support HB 1567, which aligns with Rockville’s Vision Zero program. The legislation would require an operator of a bicycle, a motor scooter, or an Electric Personal Assistive Mobility Device (EPAMD) to exercise due care to avoid a collision with another vehicle or a pedestrian and maintain, if practicable, a safe distance of at least 3 feet when passing a vehicle or pedestrian. It would also require an operator of a bicycle or a motor scooter to give an audible warning by voice or device before passing a pedestrian. As the use of EPAMDs, including Segways, power wheelchairs, and mobility scooters, increases, statewide policy is needed to ensure safety for all users of local public infrastructure.

We support this legislation for the following reasons:

- It would support safer passing behavior on shared-use paths and local streets.
- It would reduce unanticipated encounters with pedestrians through mandatory audible warnings.
- The bill would create predictable expectations for all micromobility operators across Maryland and enhance safety for pedestrians and bicyclists.

However, some of Rockville’s infrastructure does not provide a three-foot distance for passing a vehicle or a pedestrian. As a result, we request an amendment to provide an exception in such instances. This amendment would provide flexibility for Rockville and other local governments with similar infrastructure limitations.

HB 1567 takes an important step forward by strengthening basic safety expectations for everyone using our roads and trails. By requiring a safe passing distance, clear audible warnings, and due-care obligations, the bill offers enhanced protections that help prevent collisions and make daily travel safer for pedestrians, bicyclists, and EPAMD users. These improvements move the state closer to a transportation system that supports safe and secure travel options for all. For these reasons, we urge the Committee to provide HB 1567 with a favorable report.

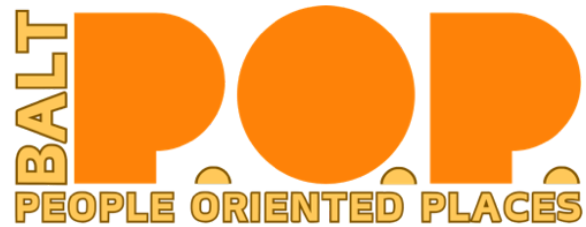
# **MGA 2026 Testimony Bill HB1567 (Pass Pedestrians S**

Uploaded by: Michael Scepaniak

Position: UNF

Bill: HB1567

Bill Title: Vehicle Laws - Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs - Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)



Position: **Unfavorable**

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 oppose HB1567.

The safety concerns expressed by this bill seem to be very misplaced. While Maryland law **does** impose a requirement on **drivers** to maintain a 3-foot buffer when passing **cyclists**, it **does not** impose a requirement on **drivers** to maintain a 3-foot buffer when passing **other automobiles or pedestrians**. So why the focus on placing the latter 3-foot buffer requirement on **cyclists** with this bill? The damage and injuries caused by an automobile strike are many times greater than the damage and injuries caused by a bicycle strike. The asymmetric risk profiles at play here justify the different safety measures/standards.

The 3-foot requirement imposed by this bill would make it impracticable for a cyclist to travel on the vast majority of bicycle facilities in Maryland and still comply with the law. Consider that a standard bike lane is typically 4–5 feet wide and designed for travel adjacent to parked vehicles and/or motor vehicle travel lanes. Cyclists also typically find themselves on narrow residential streets with on-street parking, passing stopped vehicles in an adjacent travel lane, and maneuvering around vehicles blocking a bike lane.

Yes, the bill uses the qualifier “when practicable”, but there are precious few instances when traveling on a bicycle facility where maintaining a 3-foot buffer with automobiles is feasible. And, when traveling on a roadway without a bicycle facility, maintaining a 3-foot buffer with automobiles would require the cyclist to boldly and daringly “take the lane” - a truly daunting demand.

Please consider that to be a cyclist in Maryland is frequently an exercise in frustration and requires a lot of nerve. In most Maryland communities, bicycle infrastructure meant for daily, functional use is, for the most part, non-existent and, at best, inconsistent.

Bicycle infrastructure can range from faded sharrows on the roadway to a thin white line adjacent to a curb to a lane running through the door zone of a row of parked cars. Bike lanes will frequently run for a couple blocks and then abruptly stop. Cycle tracks are prone to having

automobiles park in them and debris collect in them, with no attempt ever made to have snow cleared from them. And this is when bicycle infrastructure actually exists.

In most cases, cyclists find themselves biking along roads with no facilities built for them, with nothing at all preventing them from getting struck by an automobile other than defensive measures and the due diligence of drivers. Cyclists are the epitome of vulnerable road users (VRUs).

And yet, this bill seeks to protect drivers (and pedestrians) from those cyclists. We are not aware of any evidence that this is an issue worth addressing. Conversely, the long-standing issue that **does** need to be addressed are VRUs being struck by automobiles.

Specific to the Baltimore region, the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB), on an annual basis, tracks five performance/safety measures to carry out the Federal Highway Administration's Highway Safety Improvement Program. The last of those five measures is "Number of Non-motorized Fatalities & Serious Injuries". The absolute numbers and trend for this measure are abysmal.

The 2024 number for this measure was 398, which is a 37% **increase** over the 2005–2009 baseline number of 290. The BRTB's proposed target for this measure is 306 by 2030 [1], an **increase** from last year's 2030 target of 294 [2]. In terms of VRU deaths and serious injuries, BRTB's target will make active transportation users less safe than they were 20 years ago. The times when people truly need protecting are when they are on bicycles, not when they are inside automobiles.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote against HB1567**. Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to testify on this legislation.

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

[1] Baltimore Metropolitan Council proposed Resolution #26-18: "Adopting Highway Safety Targets for the Baltimore Region"

<https://baltometro.org/wp-content/uploads/BRTBRes26-18-1.pdf>

[2] Baltimore Metropolitan Council Resolution #25-19: "Adopting Highway Safety Targets for the Baltimore Region"

[https://baltometro.org/wp-content/uploads/files/bmc\\_documents/committee/resolutions/brtb/BRTBRes25-19.pdf](https://baltometro.org/wp-content/uploads/files/bmc_documents/committee/resolutions/brtb/BRTBRes25-19.pdf)

**Bike Maryland Coalition UNFV HB1567 3\_10\_2026.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nigel Samaroo

Position: UNF



**Bill:** HB 1567 - Vehicle Laws – Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs – Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)

**Position:** UNFAVORABLE

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

We strongly support the safety of all vulnerable road users — pedestrians, cyclists, and those traveling by assistive or other micromobility devices. It is precisely because of this commitment that we urge the Committee to find HB 1567 **UNFAVORABLE**. The bill as drafted is substantially redundant with existing law, fails to address a primary source of pedestrian safety concern, and creates requirements that are unworkable in practice and potentially harmful.

**1. The bill does not address e-motos.**

Much of the recent public concern about pedestrian safety near bicycles and micromobility devices stems from the proliferation of electric devices commonly called “e-motos” — vehicles that can be visually mistaken for a bicycle or a scooter, but far exceed the speed and power of [electric bicycles](#) or [low-speed electric scooters](#) as defined under Maryland statute. E-motos are already prohibited from trails and sidewalks and require licensure, registration, and insurance for road use. Enforcement is the challenge. HB 1567 does not address e-moto riders, who represent a far more significant hazard than people on bicycles. We share this safety concern and urge the legislature to focus attention on where the greatest danger actually exists.

**2. The 3-foot vehicle passing requirement risks creating unintended negative consequences.**

Maryland Transportation Code §[21-1205\(c\)](#) already requires cyclists to exercise due care when passing a vehicle — a flexible, context-sensitive standard that reflects real-world conditions. A rigid 3-foot rule, even qualified by *when practicable* cannot be maintained in a standard bike lane (typically 4–5 feet wide and designed for travel adjacent to parked vehicles and motor vehicle travel lanes), on narrow residential streets with on-street parking, when passing stopped vehicles in an adjacent travel lane, or when maneuvering around vehicles blocking a bike lane. Even some protected bike lanes do not have at least 3 feet of separation from nearby parked or stopped vehicles. It would not even be possible for cyclists to pass one another in opposite directions in a protected 2-way bike lane. These are not edge cases — they are everyday cycling conditions across Maryland (see below some representative images from existing bike infrastructure in Maryland). Critically, imposing a 3-foot clearance requirement inadvertently could expose injured cyclists to contributory negligence claims that would bar them entirely from recovering civil damages following a crash.

We are unaware of any other state that has adopted a specific minimum-distance requirement for cyclists passing motor vehicles. Nationally, cyclists are generally subject to the same broad “due care” or “safe distance” rules that apply to all vehicles when overtaking — as is already the case



in Maryland — no state has set a numerical threshold like 3 feet. Notably, Maryland does not impose a 3-foot requirement on drivers passing other motor vehicles or pedestrians.

Most states, including Maryland, do require drivers to pass people on bikes with at least 3 feet. This difference makes sense given the physics involved: a bicyclist passing a stopped or slow car poses very little danger to the car's occupants, whereas a multi-thousand-pound vehicle passing a bicyclist at speed is a serious safety risk.

### **3. The bill is redundant with existing law.**

Bicyclists already are required by Maryland Transportation Code §§ [21-504](#) (through [21-1202](#)), [21-1202\(b\)\(3\)](#), [21-1205\(a\)\(4\)](#), [21-1205.1\(b\)\(2\)\(i\)](#) to exercise due care to avoid colliding with pedestrians, making part of this bill redundant. With regard to passing pedestrians, the law currently applies the same standard to people riding bicycles that it does to people driving motor vehicles: exercise due care. To the extent HB 1567 seeks to address cyclist-pedestrian conflicts, its provisions are largely duplicative. Adding new mandates on top of adequate existing law creates confusion without improving safety.

### **4. Context matters and a rigid 3-foot passing law is not safe or practicable in most places.**

Safe passing distance between a cyclist and a pedestrian is highly context dependent. Cyclists must simultaneously account for approaching and passing motor vehicles, other cyclists, road debris, potholes, parked cars, curbs, physical obstructions, bidirectional pedestrian traffic, and the relatively narrow width of many shared-use facilities, like shared-use paths and trails. In many common situations — on shared-use paths and narrow roadways — maintaining 3 feet is physically impossible without creating greater danger for the cyclist and others. We are not aware of any other state with a similar requirement. We would not even introduce the concept of a 3-foot pass when teaching safe cycling to children or adults for fear that they might try to achieve that and put themselves in peril without improving safety for the pedestrian.

### **5. We support requiring audible signals on trails.**

We support requiring cyclists to provide an audible warning when passing pedestrians. In practice, this is most relevant on shared-use paths and trails, where such conduct is typically already set by local trail rules and guidance. We do not oppose this provision but note that it does not justify the bill's more problematic mandatory distance requirements.

### **6. Safe infrastructure is the most effective remedy.**

Pedestrians and cyclists are already navigating dangerous, inconsistent, and inadequate infrastructure — bike lanes, shoulders, sidewalks, paths, and crosswalks that appear and disappear without warning. Consistent, well-designed infrastructure — all-ages & abilities bike facilities separated from pedestrians in dense and congested areas; clearly marked shared-use paths wide enough for multiple people to travel next to, and pass, one another safely; calmer streets that allow more people to safely bike off sidewalks and trails; and, predictable traffic controls — will do far more to reduce potential cyclist-pedestrian conflicts than 3-foot passing requirements that are impracticable in most existing contexts.



For the reasons set forth above, we respectfully urge the Committee to find HB 1567 **UNFAVORABLE** and to recommend its withdrawal this session. There are several initiatives underway to address these and other safety issues including MDOT's Micromobility Safety Task Group and the Maryland Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Legislative Subcommittee. We would be happy to work with the bill's sponsors on a thorough, stakeholder-inclusive review of existing code, enforcement challenges — particularly regarding e-motos — infrastructure gaps, and best practices for reducing conflicts between cyclists and pedestrians before reintroducing legislation in a future session.

We remain committed to working with the General Assembly and all stakeholders to advance genuine, effective safety improvements for everyone using Maryland's roads, trails, and shared spaces. Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at [chair@bikemd.org](mailto:chair@bikemd.org).

**Baltimore Bicycling Club**

**Baltimoreans for People Oriented Places**

**Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BikeAAA)**

**Bike Harford**

**Bike Maryland**

**Bikemore**

**Bike HoCo**

**Frederick Bicycle Coalition**

**Maryland Eastern Shore Trail Network**

**Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA)**









# **HB1567 - LOI - Vehicle Laws - Bicycles, Motor Scoo**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

---

March 12, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee  
250 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – HB 1567 – Vehicle Laws – Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs – Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1567 (HB 1567) and offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

HB 1567 would require that individuals riding a bicycle, motor scooter, or an electric personal assistive mobility device (EPAMD) give an audible warning before passing a pedestrian and pass at least three feet from the pedestrian, if practicable.

MDOT agrees that care must be taken by and for all roadway users when traveling. However, the bill establishes a legal requirement that may conflict with existing roadway geometry and State law. Generally, on-street striped bicycle lanes are five feet wide with little buffer to the curb. Additionally, Maryland law requires drivers to maintain a minimum distance of three feet when passing bicyclists on the road. Without corresponding design changes or clear guidance on lane positioning and overtaking maneuvers for all vehicles, enforcement may be inconsistent or impractical. Therefore, people on bicycles, EPAMDs and motorists may not be able to obey their respective passing requirements under this legislation due to the width of facilities.

Under HB 1567, enforcement could also be challenging because language in the bill requiring that bicycles, EPAMDs, and motorists maintain distance from pedestrians, "if practicable," and to give an "audible warning" when passing are subjective. Officers would be required to closely observe the incident in order to cite an offense by the individual on the bicycle or EPAMD.

MDOT has available educational opportunities for people biking or driving on how to exercise caution while passing others, including the law for motor vehicle drivers to give three feet of space while passing people on bicycles or EPAMDs. To improve safety for all roadway users, MDOT is leading a Micromobility Safety Group through the MVA's Highway Safety Office Pedestrian and Bicycle Emphasis Area Team. The group will advise a multidisciplinary approach to safety education for people on bikes, motor scooters, and EPAMDs, making our roads safer for all users. This educational effort will help achieve the intended purpose of HB 1567.

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Page Two

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberation of HB 1567.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Mickler  
Director of Government Affairs  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
410-865-1090