



HB394 – Safe Alternative Routes to Public Schools
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee
February 12, 2026
Position: Favorable

Greetings Chair and Members of the Committee:

Our mission is to promote bicycling, increase safety, improve conditions, and provide a voice for bicyclists in Maryland who use bicycles for both transportation and recreation. We partner with advocacy organizations to promote vulnerable road user safety legislation and safe infrastructure on the state, county, and municipal level.

Children and families deserve safe places to walk and bike, especially to neighborhood public schools. Bike Maryland strongly supports HB394, which would help ensure students throughout Maryland have safe routes to school.

This bill would require: (1) evaluation of safe routes for students living within walk boundaries of public schools; (2) public reporting of these evaluations; and, (3) county review and construction of necessary sidewalks and crosswalks.

Yes, building sidewalks and crosswalks costs money. In addition to the profound costs to student safety, however, the costs of inaction are substantial:

Traffic congestion: School trips in private vehicles account for 10% of morning peak traffic.¹ Private vehicles account for half of school trips between ¼ and ½ a mile.²

Transportation budgets: Without safe routes, districts often bus students short distances at significant expense. For example, a 2024 audit found that Prince George's County spends \$40 million annually³—over ¼ of its transportation budget—busing students who live within walk boundaries.

Lost benefits: Unsafe streets deprive students of daily physical activity (which supports academic achievement and reduces preventable disease) and deprive communities of the connection that walking and biking create.

HB394 aligns with Maryland's transportation goals while investing in our children's safety and wellbeing. We urge your support.

Baltimore Cycling Club (BBC)
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)

¹ Kontou, E., McDonald, N. C., Brookshire, K., Pullen-Seufert, N., & LaJeunesse, S. (2020). U.S. active school travel in 2017: Prevalence and correlates. Preventive Medicine Reports, 17.

² <https://saferoutespartnership.org/facts/>

³ <https://go.boarddocs.com/mabe/pgcps/Board.nsf/goto?open&id=CZKRU36E470C>