

SB 155: Vehicle Laws - Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Crosswalks

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FAVORABLE

January 20, 2026

Chair Smith and Committee Members,

I support SB 155, which would both improve bicyclist safety and speed motor-vehicle traffic flow.

SB 155 – the bill could be called Bicyclist Head Start – would allow a bicyclist stopped at a red traffic signal, to proceed into and through an intersection starting at the time pedestrian “walk” signal is illuminated for travel in the bicyclist’s direction. Bicycles accelerate slowly relative to motor vehicles, so this head start – of course the bicyclist must still yield to pedestrians as already required by law – would allow the bicyclist to get up to speed and clear the intersection faster. It would reduce exposure to motor vehicles turning across the bicyclist’s path and, of course, the wait time for turning drivers.

Intersections are particularly dangerous for bicyclists. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration reports that 54.5% of bicyclist injuries occur at intersections. According to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Leading Pedestrian Intervals (LPIs), the crosswalk lights that allow pedestrians to establish a presence in the crosswalk before drivers of vehicles are given a green indication, are considered a proven safety countermeasure. FHWA reports that LPIs can lead to a 13% reduction in pedestrian vehicle crashes at intersections.

New York, Washington DC, and other jurisdictions have SB 155’s provisions in place.

The data, bicyclist experience, and common sense support enactment of a Maryland Bicyclist Head Start provision. For this reason, I urge a favorable SB 155 committee report and Senate floor vote.

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