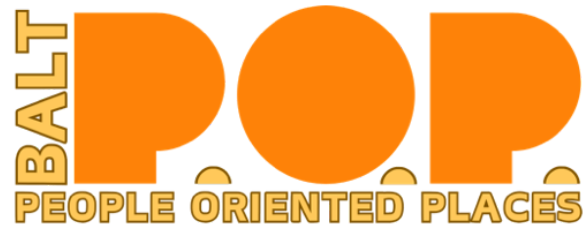


Bill: SB0487

Bill Title: Motor Vehicles – Speed Monitoring Systems – Safety Corridors (Vulnerable Road User Protection Act of 2026)



Position: **Favorable with Amendments**

Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee,

As a group which advocates for a built environment which is safe and convenient for all people, whether they are moving through that environment on foot, on a bicycle, in a wheelchair, via public transit, or in an automobile, we support SB0487.

Maryland's roadways are not safe, especially for vulnerable road users (VRUs). Despite the Vision Zero efforts of the past several years, those roadways have actually gotten less safe - for everyone.

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 numbers for this measure are abysmal.

The 2023 number for this measure was **410**, which is a **41% increase** over the 2005-2009 baseline number of **290**. The Maryland Department of Transportation's (MDOT's) current target for this measure is **294 by 2030**. [1] In terms of VRU deaths and serious injuries, MDOT is hoping to basically get us back to where we were 20 years ago. That's not progress - that's standing still.

But, breaking the horrible upward trendline of VRU deaths and serious injuries we are suffering through is a critical first step. Some of the recent actions MDOT has taken in this space, including their revamped Complete Streets policy and quick build initiatives, are very encouraging. But, they need more tools made available to them. The capability that will be afforded to them by this bill is one such tool.

This bill is very straightforward. It will allow the State Highway Administration (SHA) to place speed monitoring systems on roadways that are classified as safety corridors. The sources available for identifying these safety corridors are MDOT SHA's Pedestrian Safety Action Plan (PSAP) and MDOT SHA's Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment (VRUSA). This bill's usage of the VRUSA makes sense. Whereas the PSAP priority corridors are limited to state roads, the

VRUSA high-risk areas include local roads. [2] And all PSAP corridors are included in the VRUSA.

But that inclusion of local roads surfaces an issue with the bill. The listing of high-risk areas for Baltimore City notes the following:

While Baltimore City has numbered state routes with its city limits, these roads are not maintained by SHA. Consequently, all the high-risk areas identified within the areas of need in Baltimore City through the VRU Safety Assessment were identified as local roads. [4]

The bill states that any remaining balance of funds accrued by these speed monitoring systems shall be distributed to the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF). However, because SHA does not maintain any roads in Baltimore City, any funds accrued by any SHA-managed speed monitoring systems placed in Baltimore City will not flow back to Baltimore City. **The bill must be amended to somehow direct these funds back to the source high-risk areas in Baltimore City.**

Furthermore, the bill states that the funds are to be distributed to the TTF for a) highway safety purposes and b) state highway administration system preservation. **We would prefer to see the bill amended such that “highway safety purposes” is clarified to read “highway vulnerable road user safety purposes” and “system preservation” is either removed as a target or clarified to read “state highway administration system preservation that results in updates to the road design that improve the safety of vulnerable road users”.**

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote in favor of SB0487, 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](#)

References:

[1] “RESOLUTION #25-19 - ADOPTING HIGHWAY SAFETY TARGETS FOR THE BALTIMORE REGION”. BRTB. January 2025.

<https://baltometro.org/sites/default/files/BRTBRes25-19.pdf>

[2] MDOT SHA. “Maryland’s Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment & Pedestrian Safety Action Plan” p. 12. As of February 12, 2025.

https://www.baltometro.org/sites/default/files/bmc_documents/committee/presentations/brss/BRSS230525pres_MDOT-SHA-Vulnerable-Road-Users.pdf

[3] MDOT SHA. "Pedestrian Safety Action Plan" p. 23. May 2023. Via <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/a4c07b80731b4a109a79bf6c86aad4c9/page/Home/>

[4] MDOT SHA. "2021–2025 Maryland Strategic Highway Safety Plan, Appendix C: Vulnerable Road User Safety Assessment". p. 32. November 2023. https://zerodeathsmd.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/SHSP2021-25_compressed.pdf