

**ISAAC "YITZY" SCHLEIFER**  
FIFTH DISTRICT



**Baltimore City Council**

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February 3, 2026

Councilman Schleifer Testimony in favor of SB0258 Real Property/Dedication/Roads

Chairperson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of this bill, which would clarify that roads become public when they have been used continuously by the public for twenty years or more and have been maintained by a municipality at public expense. As Councilman of the 5<sup>th</sup> District of Baltimore City, I encounter issues around roads being deemed as “private” quite frequently.

This legislation addresses a long-standing and widespread problem that is prominent in the 5<sup>th</sup> District: roads that function as public roads in every practical sense, yet remain legally classified as private. These situations create confusion, inequity, and unnecessary legal disputes for residents, municipalities, and emergency services.

For decades, residents, delivery vehicles, school buses, utility providers, and emergency responders have relied on these roads without restriction. At the same time, municipalities have plowed snow, repaired pavement and otherwise maintained these roads using taxpayer funds. When public money has been spent and the public has relied on uninterrupted access for more than a generation, it is both reasonable and fair to recognize these roads as public.

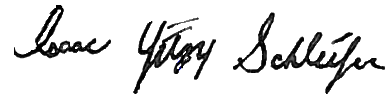
This bill promotes fairness and transparency. Property owners should not be exposed to sudden claims of private ownership after decades of open use, nor should taxpayers be asked to fund maintenance on roads that are later declared private. The legislation aligns legal status with long-established reality.

The bill also advances public safety. Emergency response depends on certainty of access. Fire, police, and medical personnel should never face questions about their right to use a road during an emergency. Clear public designation removes that risk and ensures consistent access for first responders.

In closing, this legislation brings the law into alignment with reality, protects taxpayers, enhances public safety, and provides long-overdue clarity for residents and municipalities alike. I respectfully urge the committee to give this bill a favorable report.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Isaac Gregory Schleifer". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'I' and 'S'.