

SB 743 2026 Sen James Sponsor Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Mary-Dulany James

Position: FAV

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Judicial Proceedings Committee
Executive Nominations Committee

Senate Chair
Joint Committee on
Children, Youth, and Families

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Mary-Dulany James
In Support of Senate Bill 743 - Workgroup to Study State Laws on
Electric Bicycles - Establishment
March 10, 2026

Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 743 is a straightforward bill aimed at gathering stakeholders to examine issues relating to electric bicycles and other micro-mobility devices and make recommendations for revisions to state law that will improve public safety. During the 2025 legislative interim, Bel Air Police Chief Charles Moore shared with the Harford County Delegation his concerns about the growing number of incidents the Bel Air Police are seeing involving electric bicycles (e-bikes). There have been several encounters in the city with teenagers riding e-bikes recklessly through streets and pedestrian areas, putting themselves and those around them at risk.

This is not only a problem in Bel Air. Jurisdictions throughout the country are looking at taking action to address the safety concerns related to the use of e-bikes and other electric micromobility devices. A study out of Columbia University found that between 2019 and 2022, the rate of e-bike injuries increased 293 percent.¹ A report from the United States Consumer Product Safety Commission documented 53 e-bike related deaths in 2022 and 76 in 2023, compared to only 6 in 2018.² There was even a situation in New Jersey last year where a 13-year-old was killed while riding his e-bike on a public road.³

¹ [E-Bike, Powered Scooter Injuries Spike | Columbia University Mailman School of Public Health](#)

² [Micromobility Products-Related Deaths Injuries and Hazard Patterns 2017-2021](#)

³ [Teen on e-bike dies after being hit by a landscaping truck, N.J. officials say - nj.com](#)

In New Jersey, the legislature responded to that tragedy by passing new regulations on e-bikes that proved to be controversial.⁴ Senate Bill 743 aims to take a more measured and collaborative approach.

The bill before the committee today simply creates a workgroup with relevant stakeholders to study our current laws in the light of these academic studies to see if we can find a better statutory framework to promote public safety. Since the current e-bike statute was set up in 2019, e-bikes have grown in popularity, and we have substantially more information about how they are used in practice. It is time for Maryland to revisit this statute and keep the conversation going on how to keep our public roadways safe for everyone.

Thank you for your consideration and I ask for a favorable report on Senate Bill 743.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary-Dulany James". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Senator Mary-Dulany James

Harford County, Maryland

⁴ [Gov. Phil Murphy signs e-bike bill criticized by bike advocates • New Jersey Monitor](#)

MGA 2026 Testimony Bill SB0743 (Electric Bicycles)

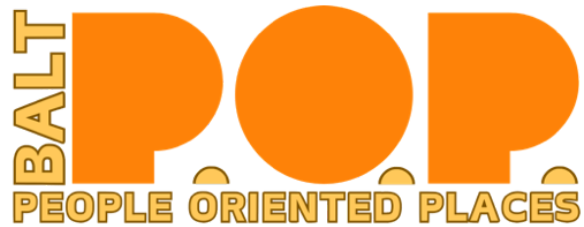
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Position: UNF

Bill: SB0743

Bill Title: Workgroup to Study State Laws on Electric Bicycles - Establishment

Position: **Unfavorable**



Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings 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 are very much in support of seeing greater adoption of electric bicycles. But, we don't see the workgroup SB0743 would create being the best route for accomplishing that.

We are concerned with the bill's call for the workgroup to be heavily skewed toward law enforcement interests. This could result in an overly restrictive set of recommendations being issued by the workgroup that are overly focused on public safety. This would be a shame, as greater adoption of electric bicycles would bring with it a host of benefits.

In addition, it is our understanding that MDOT has launched a Micromobility Safety Task Force (MSTF) that is focused on safety pertaining to electric bicycles and other electric devices - including the faster, more powerful devices commonly called "e-motos" that are often marketed as e-bikes. In contrast to the membership called for by this bill's workgroup, the MSTF will have a broad membership that will study the issue from a comprehensive number of angles.

Any legislation-focused recommendations that may be beyond the scope of the MSTF are slated to be made by the Legislative Subcommittee of the Maryland Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (MBPAC), which is sponsored by MDOT.

In short, we feel that the workgroup called for by this bill is duplicative of efforts that are already underway within MDOT, and being pursued in a more capable fashion than would be by this bill's workgroup.

If it is decided that MDOT's efforts are insufficient, we would like to see this bill call for the envisioned workgroup to include **three bicycle advocates** to counterbalance the three representatives of law enforcement agencies currently called for in the bill.

With the bill's focus on law enforcement representation, it would appear that the bill is attempting to equate electric bicycles with automobiles, motorcycles, and mopeds. But, electric bicycles promise a number of benefits and advantages, especially in comparison to automobiles, including the following:

- Whereas automobiles (and to a lesser degree motorcycles) put significant wear and tear on roadways, electric bicycles do not.
- Whereas automobiles are most often built for four or more passengers, yet are used to transport only a single occupant most of the time, electric bicycles offer a 10x greater roadway throughput and can reduce roadway congestion.
- Whereas the starting price for an automobile is such that owning one can be out of reach for many lower-income residents, the price points of electric bicycles are much more affordable.
- Whereas automobiles pose a tremendous risk (in terms of death and serious injury) to any pedestrian they strike, the risk profile of electric bicycles to pedestrians is obviously less. Furthermore, a person driving an automobile is put at very little personal risk of injury in any such crash, whereas the same cannot be said of a person riding an electric bicycle. As such, a person riding an electric bicycle has ample reason to travel in the presence of pedestrians with ample caution.
- Whereas an automobile requires that we waste valuable land on unproductive parking lots and/or expensive parking garages (which contribute to housing unaffordability), electric bicycles require a small fraction of that storage space.
- Whereas automobiles (and to a lesser degree motorcycles) are a sedentary form of transportation, electric bicycles are an active form of transportation which contributes to improved physical health.
- Whereas the carbon emission profile of automobiles is slowly improving from a deeply negative starting point, the carbon emission profile of electric bicycles puts them central to the clean transportation transition - today.

In short, the collective benefits Maryland stands to yield from greater adoption of electric bicycles is large, whereas the relative risk profile is low. As such, we don't understand this bill's focus on filling the workgroup with law enforcement interests.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote against SB0743**. Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to testify on this legislation.

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

BikeMD_SB743-UNF-20260310.pdf

Uploaded by: Nigel Samaroo

Position: UNF



March 10, 2026

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee - **Unfavorable**

SB 743 – Workgroup to Study State Laws on Electric Bicycles

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

Bike Maryland and the undersigned coalition of organizations from across Maryland, representing thousands of cyclists across the state, offer this position.

We share the safety concerns about the proliferation of electric mobility devices, especially among youth. We are particularly concerned about the deceptive marketing of devices that exceed the statutory definition of *electric bicycle* as “ebikes”. These devices commonly referred to as “e-motos” exceed the speed and power limits of *electric bicycles* and already require license, registration and insurance under Maryland law. Unfortunately, this is not widely understood by the public and enforcement is challenging. This includes electric devices promoted as “ebikes” but are actually mopeds, dirt bikes, motorcycles and such.

There are several initiatives underway that the bill seeks to address including:

1. **MDOT Micromobility Task Force** focused on a multidisciplinary approach to safety education, including targeted resource distribution to law enforcement, local jurisdictions, advocates, schools, at-risk populations, and retailers. The group aims to improve micromobility safety by analyzing crash data and adapting safety materials.
2. **The Maryland Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (MBPAC) Legislative Subcommittee** which recommends legislation and assesses similar initiatives in other states.
3. **Infrastructure improvements** by SHA under Vision Zero, Complete Streets, Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, Vulnerable Road User Safety Corridors and similar programs implemented by local jurisdictions.

We agree with the objectives of SB743 but these task groups, policies and programs are already underway. If the bill proceeds, the goals will not be met without a more robust task force membership to include industry, safety and advocacy groups.

Baltimore Area Bicycling Association (BABA)
Baltimoreans for People Oriented Places (BaltPOP)
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)

SB0743 - LOI - OATM - Workgroup to Study Electric

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

March 3, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr.
Chair, Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 743 – Workgroup to Study State Laws on Electric Bicycles – Establishment

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 743 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

SB 743 proposes to establish a working group to study electric bicycles, known as e-bikes. The working group would review current State laws on e-bikes and make recommendations to improve public safety, review safety concerns for e-bike riders and other roadway users, and consider other micromobility devices with respect to public safety.

MDOT concurs that safety is paramount for all roadway users, including e-bike riders. As e-bikes become increasingly popular, MDOT is working to enhance safety by developing and distributing resources on e-micromobility, defined as electric-powered, small, low-speed devices, including e-bikes and e-scooters. Guided by MDOT’s 2050 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan, MDOT recently released a regulatory overview of e-micromobility, describing Maryland’s requirements, where to ride, and the importance of properly maintaining vehicles for safety.

MDOT is leading a Micromobility Safety Group through the MVA’s Highway Safety Office Pedestrian and Bicycle Emphasis Area Team. Through monthly meetings in 2026, the group will advise a multidisciplinary approach to safety education, including targeted resource distribution to law enforcement, local jurisdictions, advocates, schools, at-risk populations, and retailers. The group aims to improve micromobility safety by analyzing crash data and adapting safety materials for use in Maryland, making our roads safer for all users, meeting the intent of SB 743.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberation of Senate Bill 743.

Respectfully submitted,

Matthew Mickler
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
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