

Pass Pedestrians Safely Testimony Senate 26.pdf

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

HB 1567: Vehicle Laws – Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs – Overtaking and Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act) Support

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
April 1, 2026

Testimony of Delegate Odom

Thank you, Chair Smith and Vice Chair Waldstreicher, for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of HB 1567, the **Pass Pedestrians Safely Act**.

As Maryland continues to expand multimodal transportation options, it is increasingly important that our laws clearly define safe behavior for all users of shared roads, trails, and more. HB 1567 prioritizes pedestrian safety by requiring riders of bicycles, motor scooters, and electric personal assistive mobility devices (EPAMDs) to issue an audible warning before passing pedestrians in shared spaces for bikes and foot traffic.

Under current state law, micromobility users are not required to provide an audible warning when passing pedestrians. HB 1567 fills this gap, where riders will be required to provide any audible signal, whether the signal is by voice, bell, or another audible device. This step ensures that pedestrians are aware of approaching riders and can react appropriately. Many responsible riders already practice this courtesy; and this bill helps standardize that behavior statewide.

Importantly, the legislation also clarifies equipment standards for EPAMDs, allowing them to be equipped with bells, horns, or other audible signaling devices while prohibiting sirens or whistles. This ensures that riders have the tools necessary to safely alert pedestrians.

The bill further strikes an appropriate balance in enforcement by establishing violations as a secondary offense with a modest \$25 civil penalty, reinforcing safety expectations while avoiding overly punitive enforcement. To clarify, police may not pull a rider over for any violation pertaining to this bill. A fine would only apply after a rider has already been pulled over legally. The bill is simple: It highlights that pedestrian protection matters.

Together, these provisions aim to promote predictable, courteous behavior on shared transportation infrastructure, reduce the risk of pedestrian injuries, and help align Maryland's laws with the realities of modern micromobility.

By adopting these measures, Maryland would be catching up to States such as Michigan, Massachusetts, Minnesota, Virginia, and Colorado which have already implemented the audible requirement. Right now, Maryland is trailing behind these states.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to give **HB 1567 a favorable report.**

Bike Maryland Coalition FWA HB1567-JPR-20260401.pd

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Judicial Proceedings Committee - April 1, 2026

Bill: HB 1567 - Vehicle Laws – Bicycles, Motor Scooters, and EPAMDs – Passing (Pass Pedestrians Safely Act)

Position: FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee,

We strongly support the safety of all vulnerable road users — pedestrians, cyclists, and those traveling by assistive or other micromobility devices. This is why we worked with the bill sponsor to amend HB 1567. The bill as currently amended requires a person riding a bicycle to provide an audible warning when overtaking and passing a pedestrian, a practice we have always promoted. In practice, this applies in spaces that are shared by pedestrians and bicyclists such as shared-use paths, sidewalks and crosswalks. Among the states that require an audible warning, as far as we are aware, all confine the requirement to spaces shared by pedestrians and bicyclists. Pedestrians are typically not in the roadway, but when they are, bicyclists already have the same duty of care as drivers to avoid collisions with pedestrians. We therefore recommend this amendment:

**AN OPERATOR OF A BICYCLE, A MOTOR SCOOTER, OR AN EPAMD
ON A SIDEWALK, CROSSWALK OR SHARED USE PATH
SHALL GIVE AN AUDIBLE WARNING BY VOICE OR BELL, HORN, OR OTHER DEVICE
BEFORE OVERTAKING AND PASSING A PEDESTRIAN.**

The change above also helps somewhat with the danger of "e-motos" (the higher speed devices that resemble e-bicycles but exceed statutory speed and power limits) since e-motos are typically already prohibited from sidewalks, crosswalks and shared-use paths. Of course enforcement remains a challenge.

On behalf of the Bike Maryland coalition, thank you for supporting safety, especially for the most vulnerable. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Jon Korin at president@bikeaaa.org.

Baltimoreans for People Oriented Places
Bicycle Advocates for Annapolis & Anne Arundel County (BikeAAA)
Bike Harford
Bike Maryland
Bikemore
Bike HoCo
Frederick Bicycle Coalition
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