



**Testimony of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association in Support of  
B23-242, the Bicycle Advisory Council Expansion Amendment Act of 2019; B23-257, the Mandatory  
Protected Cycling Lane Amendment Act of 2019; B23-288, the Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus  
Amendment Act of 2019; B23-292, the Curb Extensions Act of 2019; B23-293, the Cyclist Safety  
Campaign Amendment Act of 2019; B23-412, the Ignition Interlock Program Amendment Act of 2019;  
and B23-415, the Vision Zero Distracted Driving Amendment Act of 2019**

DC Council Committee on Transportation and the Environment  
October 24, 2019

Chair Cheh and Members of the Committee:

My name is Greg Billing, I am the Executive Director of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. Thank you for the opportunity to testify today on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association and our 2,500 DC members and 60,000 supporters in the region.

We are here today because DC is not meeting its commitment to Vision Zero, the goal to eliminate traffic fatalities and serious injuries by 2024. More people will continue to be killed or seriously injured in traffic crashes and communities continued to be harmed if we continue to not make meaningful progress toward our Vision Zero commitment.

While the DC government, and the lead agency the District Department of Transportation (DDOT), has made some progress on moving important projects and initiatives forward, they are still under-resourced and they lack the mandate to deliver on building and maintaining safer streets. Initiatives like expanding the protected bike lane networks that are needed to protect people on bikes and improve safety for all road users are endlessly behind schedule in implementation. These projects are critical to helping us meet our transportation safety and mobility goals, along with out environmental and climate goals. These goals are reflected in the MoveDC transportation plan and the Sustainable DC plan, as well as the landmark Clean Energy DC Omnibus Act of 2018.

We would like to thank this committee for its continued attention on the issue of street safety through legislation, roundtable hearings and performance oversight. Last year's Vision Zero roundtable hearing spurred the administration to address underlying governance and accountability issues of Vision Zero. DDOT established a Vision Zero office with a director. There are now two Deputy Mayors tasked with managing and coordinating all DC government agencies contributing to Vision Zero.

In order to move DC closer to meeting its safety goals, WABA fully supports the slate of bills being considered today and when presented together represent an important step forward for safer streets. We support:

1. Bicycle Advisory Council Expansion Amendment Act of 2019
2. Mandatory Protected Cycling Lane Amendment Act of 2019
3. Curb Extensions Act of 2019, Cyclist Safety Campaign Amendment Act of 2019
4. Vision Zero Distracted Driving Amendment Act of 2019
5. Ignition Interlock Program Amendment Act of 2019.

We thank Councilmember Cheh for authoring and introducing the Mandatory Protected Cycling Lane Amendment Act modeled on similar successful legislation in Cambridge, MA designed to leverage routine maintenance, and minor and major roadwork projects to fully building out the planned protected bike lane network. WABA's 20x20 campaign set an ambitious, yet achievable goal of 20 miles of new or upgraded protected bike lanes by the end of 2020. This piece of legislation would accelerate the installation of protected bike lanes which improves safety for people walking, biking and driving.

We also fully support the Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2019. The Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act of 2019 has strong policy solutions to make our streets safer. Policies such as banning right-on-red turns in DC and limiting speed limits to 25 mph on major arterials roads and 20 mph on all other roads make driving safer for everyone. But more broadly, this legislation, if enacted, would systematize transportation planning by adopting a multi-modal transportation plan, requiring projects to adhere to the plan and the plan to be regularly revised. These important changes would better ensure safer streets are built with community input but not subject to constant meddling and reduced safety benefits.

The suggested changes that we would like to see included in the bill are the following:

- Mandating four-way stops is fairly prescriptive. We support intersections that prevent crashes through a variety of appropriate designs (four-way stops, raised crosswalks, mini-roundabouts, etc). We do not support DDOT being allowed to install stop signs only for one direction of travel at four-way intersections without speed control.
- We support giving DDOT the ability to rapidly install safety improvements after a serious crash or fatality using an expedited notice of intent process with stakeholders and ANCs. We do think ANCs should be notified and provided an opportunity to submit comments after the improvements are made. DDOT must not wait 30 business days to prevent future injuries or death.
- We support a requirement that all DDOT Capital Improvement Plan Projects must increase traffic safety and transit equity, but believe it needs additional clarification to achieve the desired outcomes of transportation equity.

- We do not support creating a Citizen Traffic Safety Enforcement Pilot program. This pilot program is fraught with equity issues. This would put citizens in a quasi-enforcement position and potentially hostile interactions with the public. We think other efforts such as the FY2020 funding for an expanded DPW parking enforcement team and faster reporting mechanisms from the public such as How's My Driving App is more likely to achieve the desired outcome of fewer illegally and dangerously parked vehicles.

Additionally, The Vision Zero Enhancement Omnibus Amendment Act would be made stronger if we included the following additions:

- Requirements for number of miles of protected bike lanes and bus priority lanes to be constructed annually and consequences for missing targets.
- Any special call out of bridges to be upgraded for ADA, pedestrian, bicycle access when bridge redecking or rebuilding occurs.
- Equity considerations such as more funding for traffic calming projects Wards 7 and 8, and more projects in communities with high crash and high fatality rates.
- Reduced Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) to reduce risk exposure and achieve clear air goals.
- A process to address "legacy" neighborhood concerns. Neighborhoods with long-standing pedestrian safety concerns should be prioritized.

Since 2016 we have had 82 traffic fatalities and 2,983 major injuries from traffic crashes, according to the DC open data. Importantly, pedestrians and bicyclists account for approximately 40 percent of all fatalities in the District and 35 percent of all traffic-related injuries -- a disproportionate impact when considering the percentage of people who walk and bike.

These numbers represent unspeakable pain that DC residents have had to endure. Since the creation of Vision Zero initiative in DC, we have lost children, teens, seniors, and loved ones to preventable traffic crashes. Countless numbers of DC residents and visitors have had to bear the cost of devastating medical trauma caused by crashes, unexpected financial costs, long recoveries and severe emotional pain. People significantly injured in a traffic crash will never be the same afterwards and many never fully recover.

Throughout the years you have seen hundreds of us rally, thousands of us sign petitions, and many of us testify at countless hearings demanding the policy changes that will make Vision Zero a reality, that will make pedestrian safety and alternative modes of transportation more equitable, and that will send a message that each traffic fatality and injury matters to you as policy makers.

Now is the time to strengthen these bills and push them forward.

Now is the time to show that Vision Zero isn't a policy idea on paper but an implemented solution that is making our streets safer.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today.