



March 15, 2023

**TESTIMONY OF THE WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION ON  
B25-0115, THE “ELECTRIC BICYCLE REBATE PROGRAM AMENDMENT ACT OF  
2023”**

Councilmember Allen and Members of the Committee:

My name is Jeremiah Lowery and I am the Advocacy Director of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA). Thank you for the opportunity to testify.

I am writing on behalf of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) and its members across the Washington metropolitan area to express our strong support of “The Electric Bicycle Rebate Program Amendment Act of 2023”.

E-bike rebate programs have been done in other locations such as Denver, Colorado, and according to Ride Report’s analysis of the outcome the Denver program, “The rebates were so popular the monthly allotments were gone within minutes, ebikes were on back-order, local and national coverage was continuous, and the Governor even enacted the first official statewide ebike day.”

E-bike rebate programs are both sound economic and environmental policy that cities across the U.S. are starting to catch wind of, and now it’s the District’s turn to reap the economic and environmental benefits of an e-bike rebate program.

As D.C. begins the discussion on the creation of its first e-bike rebate program, we would like to highlight areas of the legislation that we strongly agree with and some changes we would like to see in the bill.

The following is part of the bill that we strongly agree with:

- **The Focus on Equity:** Designing a rebate program that ensures a portion of rebates go to residents who are financially low-income is key to ensuring the

program is benefiting those most in need. Also, defraying costs associated with opening a retail establishment located in Ward 7 or 8 is a step towards ensuring ward 7 and 8 residents don't have to go across town to seek repairs or purchase an e-bike, while at the same time encouraging economic development in the wards.

We are excited to see that this bill will allow purchases at the point of sale, this will ensure residents don't have to pay the full cost up front while waiting on a rebate later.

Also, using funds to pay for e-bike components intended to address an applicant's disability are key to designing a rebate program that addresses the needs of all residents. Additionally, including e-cargo bikes will meet the needs of a growing number of families who are choosing to use e-bikes instead of cars to commute in Washington, D.C.

- **Funding to train staff at bike shops and consumers:** This rebate will cause a boom in the number of e-bikers on D.C. streets, so with more riders comes more need for maintenance, therefore we support the allocation of grant funds to train bike shop staff to help them become knowledgeable and capable to fix e-bikes in need of repair. In addition, we should also provide funding to teach consumers how to maintain and ride e-bikes.

Some change we would like to see in the bill include:

- After all the rebate funds are exhausted we would like to see DDOT issue a report on the progress of the rebate program including surveying rebate users to get feedback on their experience on using the rebate and how using an e-bike has affected their lives. The report and surveys will give us feedback on how to improve the program for future years.
- We ask that DDOT use UL 2849 electrical and fire safety certification when determining whether or not an e-bike is fit to enter into the District's market.
- Finding a dedicated funding source for the program will ensure that more rebates, including residents who are financially low-income, are able to afford an e-bike in the future.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify and we look forward to working with you on moving this important bill forward.

Sincerely,

Jeremiah Lowery, Advocacy Director