



HB 111: Bicycles, Play Vehicles, and Unicycles - Authorizations and Requirements
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Washington Area Bicyclist Association – FAVORABLE

February 1, 2024

Chair Korman and Committee Members,

Transportation safety is a paramount mobility concern. HB 111, allowing bikes on sidewalks as the default state-wide, would make bicycling safer. The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA), an advocacy organization with 1,200 Maryland members, supports the bill.

Bicycling in traffic with cars, trucks, and buses is dangerous and discouraging for bicyclists, yet Maryland law currently prohibits people, including children, from riding a bicycle (or a scooter) on a sidewalk unless expressly allowed by local ordinance. Montgomery and Howard Counties do have an ordinance to allow bikes on sidewalks and have experienced no significant issues. It's time to make this simple and sensible provision uniform across the state, by enacting HB 111.

Maryland is committed to Vision Zero, a goal of zero motor vehicle-related fatalities and serious injuries by 2030. We are building out a network of bike lanes and trails while working to make neighborhood streets safer for all users. Allowing bicycling on sidewalks is part of this important in-progress work.

Allowing bicycling on sidewalks also advances equity. Many lower-income individuals rely on a bicycle for trips to work, school, shopping, and other destinations, and bike for recreation, but live and travel in areas that lack safe bikeways.

Making bikes on sidewalks the default, via HB 111, will help Maryland meet our transportation safety and equity and Vision Zero pledges.

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association urges a Favorable HB 111 committee report and House floor vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

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