



HB 156: Transportation - Electric Bicycle Rebate and Voucher Program -
Establishment

House Environment and Transportation Committee
Washington Area Bicyclist Association – FAVORABLE

February 8, 2024

Chair Korman and Committee Members,

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) absolutely loves HB 156, which would establish an Electric Bicycle Rebate and Voucher Program.

E-bikes boost mobility, are far greener than electric vehicles (EVs) (which still represent cars and trucks on the road), and are more affordable than any type of car. E-bikes open up bicycling as an option for commuting, shopping and other trips around the community, and taking children to and from preschool, and they make bicycling possible in hilly areas and for longer-distance local trips that aren't feasible on a conventional bike for many people. They do all this while reducing road congestion, because e-bike trips often replace car travel.

Subsidies, in the form of rebates and purchase vouchers, make e-bikes affordable for individuals with financial challenges, so we particularly like HB 156's focus on Maryland residents whose income falls below a threshold or who receive Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits.

Many jurisdictions around the country have now established an e-bike purchase subsidy program, including the District of Columbia, in 2023. The Transportation Research and Education Center (TREC) provides a very helpful survey of E-Bike Incentive Programs in North America, on their Web site (<https://trec.pdx.edu/e-bike-research>). On the environmental front, the article [8 New Insights From Denver's EBike Incentive Program](#) provides helpful stats on Denver's experience, quoting an analysts who states, *"The success of the Denver rebate program—and its clear impact on reducing transportation emissions—suggests that policymakers need to take e-bikes much more seriously as a climate action tool."* TREC provides a useful Electric Vehicle Incentive Cost and Impact Tool, developed to give public stakeholders and advocates the ability to visualize the potential outcomes of an electric vehicle incentive program, at <https://trec-pdx.shinyapps.io/incentive-impact-tool/>.

The General Assembly has a wonderful opportunity to make e-bikes affordable for Marylanders with modest financial resources, boosting equitable, green mobility at very modest cost to the state. WABA urges a Favorable HB 156 committee report and House floor vote.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

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