



## Montgomery County Delegation Joint House and Senate Priorities Hearing

November 13, 2023

Chairs Kramer and Palakovich Carr and Members of the Montgomery County Delegation,

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) is an advocacy organization with over 1,300 Maryland members. We envision a just and sustainable transportation system where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around.

WABA asks you to consider three Montgomery County state priorities:

**1) Termination of plans for I-495/I-270 toll lanes in Montgomery County and of Beltway toll lanes in Prince George's County**, with funds allocated instead to transit, bicycle, pedestrian, and road-safety projects. We note in particular the looming WMATA "fiscal cliff," which should be addressed with all needed resources.

**2) Funding of Montgomery County bicycle, pedestrian, and road-safety projects currently included in Maryland's [FY2024-FY2029 Consolidated Transportation Program](#)**, including bikeways associated with the Purple Line, and additionally funding of creation of master-planned bikeways along key transit corridors, calling out in particular US 29 in the Burnt Mills/Northwest Branch area, the full extent of MD 586 Veirs Mill Road including in the Wheaton central business district and in Rockville, and on MD 193 University Blvd. from Kensington across Prince George's County.

State roads dominate Montgomery County's High Injury Network. We must live up to our state and county Vision Zero commitments by funding safety and mobility improvements on these and other Montgomery County state roads.

We urge you to explore, in cooperation with the Maryland Dept. of Transportation, means of flexing or transferring federal funding from highway to transit and multi-modal and complete-streets uses as allowed by federal law. Sources that may be flexed include the Surface Transportation Block Grant, National Highway Performance Program, and Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality formulas.

**3) Enactment of state bicycle, pedestrian, and road-safety/Vision Zero legislation.**

On the legislative front, we appreciate Delegate Palakovich Carr's introduction of [MC 7-24](#), which would ban right turn on red and establish leading pedestrian intervals at state-controlled intersections, and Delegate Moon's introduction of [MC 10-24](#), which would allow jurisdictions to reduce speed limits to 15 MPH without conducting an engineering and traffic investigation.

Our state legislative agenda, developed in cooperation with other Bike Maryland member organizations, further includes a number of bills that are currently being developed:

- 1) A Great Maryland Trails Act, creating a Maryland Trails Office Trails and directing creation of an inventory and plan for a Maryland Trails Network, identifying funding sources including grants, and establishing a Trails Commission.
- 2) A bill addressing maintenance responsibility for sidewalks and bike paths along state roads that would remove the assignment of responsibility to the local government.
- 3) E-bike rebate/subsidy legislation and funding.
- 4) Stop as Yield legislation to allow cyclists to treat a Stop sign as a Yield sign, yielding to pedestrians and to vehicles that have the intersection right of way. Eleven states and the District of Columbia have adopted Stop as Yield as the safest way for bicyclists to traverse intersections.
- 5) Legislation to make allowing Bikes on Sidewalks the default state-wide.
- 6) Legislation to mandate a Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) complete streets policy or routine bicycle and pedestrian accommodations, applying to separated bicycle/pedestrian facilities on bridges and across, over, and along certain roadways.
- 7) Legislation to establish a Vision Zero Advisory Commission to boost accountability.
- 8) Legislation to extend penalties applied for collisions with pedestrians in crosswalks to bicyclists in bike lanes or address weak penalties in some other way.

We will plan to reach out to you in the coming weeks regarding this legislative agenda.

In summary, the Washington Area Bicyclist Association urges renewed Delegation opposition to Beltway/I-270 toll lanes and support for WMATA; funding of Montgomery County bicycle, pedestrian, and road-safety projects included in the Maryland Consolidated Transportation Program; and enactment and funding of pro-bicycle, pro-pedestrian legislation that would boost road safety and multi-modal transportation choice.

Seth Grimes, Maryland organizer  
Washington Area Bicyclist Association  
[seth.grimes@waba.org](mailto:seth.grimes@waba.org)