



Montgomery County Delegation Legislative Priorities Hearing

November 18, 2024

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

The Washington Area Bicyclist Association (WABA) is a regional advocacy organization that envisions a just and sustainable transportation system where walking, biking, and transit are the best ways to get around.

WABA asks you to consider four transportation-related state legislative priorities. We ask you to:

1) Ensure adequate and sustained transit capital and operational funding, for WMATA and for the Maryland Transit Administration, noting Baltimore needs, and forward-looking capital investment in Southern Maryland Rapid Transit.

We look to your leadership, working with Maryland's federal elected officials, to defend and sustain federal support for transit under the new Administration and Congressional leadership.

2) Preserve MDOT-proposed funding for the Kim Lamphier Bikeways Network Program (CTP page TSO-3).

Per the CTP, "The program helps implement MDOT's Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan by filling priority missing links in the statewide bicycling network, and improving connections to transit, work, schools, shopping, and other destinations. By creating a more integrated and safe network of bicycle facilities, the program also helps advance the Maryland Transportation Plan's goals of economic development and environmental stewardship, while strengthening the health and quality of life for local communities."

MDOT's draft FY25-FY30 CTP allocates only \$15,953,631 to the program, a \$6.5 million six-year reduction to already modest funding. MDOT's recommended amount averages less than \$2.7 million per year, statewide. Yet the demand for capital grants for local bike infrastructure is huge. Compare that Maryland jurisdictions won approximately \$40 million in federal Safe Streets for All program grants, many with bicycling components, in the program's first two years. There is high demand.

If the state budget outlook were not so difficult, we would recommend that Maryland increase annual Lamphier Program funding to \$6.5 million. That amount is just over \$1 per year for each Maryland resident, a modest investment that would, again, advance "goals of economic development and environmental stewardship, while strengthening the health and quality of life for local communities."

However we recognize a dire fiscal situation so we ask you instead to protect funding at at-least MDOT-proposed levels.

3) Preserve MDOT-proposed funding for the MDOT Complete Streets Program (CTP page SHA-SW-6).

The draft [FY25 - FY30 Consolidated Transportation Program](#) states, “Safety is a primary criterion in all of the projects and grants MDOT pursues, including implementation of the new Complete Streets Policy, the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, and the Strategic Highway Safety Plan.” In the draft CTP, this commitment takes the form of a Complete Streets Program that “will invest in prioritized corridors to reduce deaths and serious injuries for vulnerable users while also supporting the statewide safety, equity, and mode-shift goals.” Yet MDOT has decreased funding by \$10.5 million from the FY24-FY29 CTP figure, to \$86.5 million, an 11% reduction.

We again recognize a difficult fiscal situation so we ask you to maintain MDOT-proposed funding.

4) Enact state bicycle, pedestrian, and road-safety legislation.

On the legislative front, we particularly appreciate the introduction of MC 1-25, which would allow jurisdictions to reduce speed limits to 15 MPH without conducting an engineering and traffic investigation; MC 4-25, authorizing the use of stop sign monitoring systems in school zones; and MC 17-25, regarding the placement and use of speed monitoring systems and directing the use of fines to improve safety

Our state legislative agenda, developed in cooperation with other Bike Maryland member organizations, further includes a number of bills we expect to be introduced in the 2025 legislative session :

1. The Transportation Climate-Alignment Act.
2. Bicycle Safety Yield, that is, Stop as Yield. Our thanks to Senator Smith for sponsoring this bill.
3. A bill to allow Bikes on Sidewalks as the statewide default; our thanks to Senator Waldstreicher for sponsoring.
4. Reintroduction of 2024’s Electric Bicycle Rebate and Voucher Program by Delegate Robbyn Lewis.
5. A prohibition on vehicles’ stopping, standing, or parking in a bike lane. Del. Michele Guyton (D42B) will file this bill with Sen. Anthony Muse (D46) introducing it in the Senate.
6. Bicyclist Head Start, allowing a bicyclist to proceed through an intersection when the pedestrian walk signal is illuminated. Our thanks for Del. Palakovich Carr for developing this bill.

We look forward to the Delegation’s up-coming local bill hearings and will plan to reach out to you about other legislation and about program funding in the coming months.

Thank you for this opportunity to testify.

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