

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2018 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Third Reader - Revised

House Bill 285

(Delegate Luedtke, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Finance

Department of Transportation – Pedestrian and Bicycle Access to Schools

This bill requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to collect and consolidate available information from State and local agencies regarding an unmet need for safe pedestrian and bicycle access to schools throughout the State. MDOT must report its findings to the Governor and the General Assembly by January 1, 2020. **The bill terminates September 30, 2020.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Because the bill only requires MDOT to collect and consolidate available information for the required report, it is assumed that MDOT can implement the bill with existing budgeted resources.

Local Effect: The bill is not anticipated to materially affect local government operations or finances. It is assumed that any information provided by local agencies to MDOT can be handled with existing local resources.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law/Background: MDOT maintains a [Statewide Twenty Year Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan](#). Related to pedestrian and bicycle safety around schools, the plan includes and discusses the importance of the Safe Routes to Schools Program. The program is a federally funded reimbursement program administered by the State Highway Administration (SHA). Eligible sponsors can apply for funding to support infrastructure and noninfrastructure activities that enable and encourage children to safely walk, bicycle,

or roller skate to school. Federal funds allocated to the program must be used to benefit elementary and middle school children and are required to have a 20% cash match contribution from the State.

School zones and the additional traffic safety rules that accompany them are the primary safety mechanism for students who walk or bike to school. SHA or a local transportation authority is authorized to establish a school zone and maximum speed limits within the school zone, within a half-mile radius of any school. In any established school zone, SHA or the local authority must place signs that designate the school zone and may place other traffic control devices, such as timed flashing warning lights or traffic signals. The signs must show the maximum speed limit of the school zone, and standard fines may be doubled if a speed violation occurs when any timed flashing lights are activated. Many school districts also employ crossing guards and establish speed monitoring systems to ensure the safety of students and others on and around the school grounds.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland State Department of Education; Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 7, 2018
mm/lgc Third Reader - March 20, 2018
Revised - Amendment(s) - March 20, 2018

Analysis by: Richard L. Duncan

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510