

Testimony in Favor of House Bill 226
Baltimore City – Complete Streets Program Funding – Traffic and Vehicle Monitoring Systems

TO: Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
FROM: Samantha Blau

My name is Samantha Blau and I am a resident of Baltimore City in the 46th district. I write to you to ask for your support of House Bill 226 Complete Streets Program Funding – Traffic and Vehicle Monitoring Systems.

Baltimore can be a wonderful place to live; I love that in my neighborhood I have access to a gorgeous park, restaurants, a performing arts center, and a library all within a few blocks of my home. I love that Baltimore has so many accessible pedestrian neighborhoods; I have lived in Atlanta and hated how I had to drive just to access the next neighborhood over. I want Baltimore to continue to be an accessible place to live; no matter if you can afford a car or don't want to use a car, if you need wheeled assistance to move around, I want everyone to be able to safely access my city. I also want all residents' neighborhoods to have the amenities mine offers. Businesses are more likely to move into neighborhoods that offer nice sidewalks and easy access points. That is why I believe in the Complete Streets program so much. Elevating the priority of people who are not primarily moving by car is putting residents first. It's also a justice issue. Many people cannot afford to live in the neighborhood where they work, and they should still be able to get to their job without crossing a dangerous intersection and waiting 45 minutes for their bus to arrive. Many people, myself included, have a disability that means they have extra needs when making a street crossing and we should be able to access a curb cut and have a long enough cross time to move safely.

HB 226 would allow Baltimore to put more funds towards Complete Streets projects, and that means not just my neighborhood, but all neighborhoods would have useful businesses, better bus service, improved crosswalks, and more accessible spaces to move about as a non car user. That is a more pleasant city to live in and a more just city. I strongly urge a favorable report for HB 226.