



MONTGOMERY COUNTY, MARYLAND
WOMEN'S DEMOCRATIC CLUB

P.O. Box 34047, Bethesda, MD 20827

www.womensdemocraticclub.org

**House Bill 0254 – State Highway Administration – Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatalities – Infrastructure Review (Vision Zero Implementation Act of 2022)
Environment and Transportation Committee – February 3, 2022
SUPPORT**

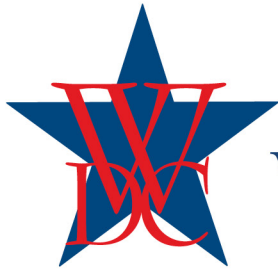
Thank you for this opportunity to submit written testimony concerning an important priority of the **Montgomery County Women's Democratic Club (WDC)** for the 2022 legislative session. WDC is one of the largest and most active Democratic Clubs in our County with hundreds of politically active women and men, including many elected officials.

WDC urges the passage of HB0254. This bill will help achieve the goal of improving pedestrian safety and lowering pedestrian death rates by conducting an in-depth analysis of incident data accompanied by recommendations for corrective action. Although Montgomery County is one of the first county governments in the United States to initiate a Vision Zero Plan¹, the data does not reflect dramatic improvement. According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), in 2019 Maryland had the 15th highest pedestrian fatality rate in the US. In fact, in 2018, there were 128 pedestrian deaths in Maryland, up from 117 in 2017, 108 in 2016 and 97 in 2015. Decedents include pedestrians struck by motor vehicles, bicycles, trains, and other transport vehicles on all types of public and nonpublic roadways and nonroad sites, such as driveways and parking lots.

The issue of pedestrian fatalities is of concern to WDC on two fronts. First, according to the CDC, older adults and children are the most frequent victims of pedestrian accidents. Pedestrians aged 65 and older accounted for 20% of all pedestrian deaths and an estimated 10% of all pedestrian injuries in 2017. Also, one in every five children under the age of 15 killed in traffic crashes was a pedestrian in 2017. Second, we know that in Montgomery County there is a high percentage of residents who commute to and from work on public transportation, which means they are walking on the public thoroughfares. According to the Montgomery County Office of Legislative Oversight², 78% of Ride On customers in 2018 were categorized as Black, Indigenous, or People of Color (BIPOC); and 47% of customers reported an annual household income of less than \$30,000.

¹ VISIONZERO-No Traffic Deaths by 2030, <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/action.html>

² Ride On Bus Routes and Services (2020, Oct. 6), Report Number 2020-10, <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/OLO/Resources/Files/2020%20Reports/OLORReport2020-10.pdf>



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Therefore, the state of our transportation infrastructure not only disproportionately impacts older residents and children, but it also has a clear racial and economic component, in that the highest percentage of residents with the potential to encounter pedestrian related fatalities are people of color and those at the lower end of the income scale.

Therefore, we ask for your support for HB0254 and strongly urge a favorable Committee report.

Respectfully,

Leslie Milano
President