



SB0315: Vehicle Laws - Bike Lanes and Shoulders - Yielding Right-of-Way
(Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act)
Judicial Proceedings Committee

Baltimore Bicycling Club – Favorable

February 21, 2024

Dear Chair Smith, Vice-Chair Waldstreicher, and Committee Members,

The Baltimore Bicycling Club (BBC) asks for your support of SB0315, the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Memorial Act.

The Baltimore Bicycling Club (BBC) was established in 1968 and has a membership of over 1000 riders. The mission of our not-for-profit recreational organization is to promote and sponsor bicycling activities in Baltimore City and neighboring Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties. The BBC also promotes, defends, and protects the rights of bicyclists for a safe road riding environment in our communities through advocacy and education.

In 2022, eleven bicyclists were killed on our state's roadways, that same year, tragically, Sarah Langenkamp was one of those fatalities. Sarah and the others who were killed are not simply a statistic, they are mothers, fathers, children, grandparents, brothers and sisters. In 2023, preliminarily the number of bicyclists killed on our state's roadways was 15. Unfortunately, that number has not decreased, in fact, 30% of Maryland's roadway deaths were Vulnerable Road Users (VRU).

Penalties on their own are not sufficient, but they can serve as a deterrent and a motivator for driver vigilance. Bike lanes like crosswalks are protected spaces for VRUs, and drivers should exercise greater care and vigilance when a VRU is using that protected space, if not the penalties should be greater for a driver hitting a bicyclist in that protected space that is a designated bike lane.

SB0315 seeks to accomplish that by subjecting the individual who causes a crash with a bicyclist in a bicycle lane or shoulder to imprisonment of up to 2 months or a fine not to exceed \$2,000.00. Maryland saw 600 road fatalities in 2023, a number not seen since 2007, an alarming increase that necessitates something be done. We feel that SB0315 is a step in the right direction in protecting bicyclists, and we urge a favorable Committee report and Senate floor vote.

Thank you for your consideration and the opportunity to testify on this legislation.

Nigel Samaroo, MPH
Chair, Advocacy Committee
Baltimore Bicycling Club