



Submitted testimony on PG/MC 113-24

Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr, House Chair
and Members, Montgomery County Delegation
House Office Building
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

December 4, 2023

Dear Delegate Palakovich Carr and Members of the Montgomery County Delegation:

My name is Dan Reed and I serve as the Regional Policy Director for [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance racial, economic, and environmental justice in land use, transportation, and housing throughout Greater Washington. **GGWash strongly opposes PG/MC 113-24, as it would severely curtail Montgomery County's efforts to make its streets safer for walking and bicycling.**


This bill would prevent the Montgomery County Planning Department from making recommendations about the location or design of sidewalks, bike lanes, or transit stops in its master plans. We believe this is a mistake. For decades, Planning's role has been to lay out the county's overall vision for transportation, and has master plans in place for highways, transitways, and pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The Department of Transportation's role is to execute the projects identified within those plans. Montgomery County has set a goal for Vision Zero—to eliminate all traffic deaths by 2030¹, and doing this requires the coordination of many different county agencies. DOT relies on Planning to do its job.

Additionally, the bill dictates that the Planning Department would only be able to make recommendations about the location of “nodes, links, and required rights-of-way.” I worked as a transportation planner for a consulting firm for nearly a decade, serving communities across North America, including here in Montgomery County. I can't tell you what “nodes” or “links” mean, because they don't have formal definitions. Were this bill to pass, defining this vague terminology would be a massive roadblock at best and make this bill unenforceable.

We have a saying in transportation that the “best transportation plan is a good land use plan.” It makes sense for the Planning Department, which is charged with land use planning, to consider both land use and transportation in its work. This is especially important now, because as of October 2023, 36 people this year have been killed on Montgomery County roads, the highest amount we've seen since 2007².

¹ <https://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/visionzero/action.html>

² <https://moco360.media/2023/10/05/marylands-2023-traffic-fatalities-may-top-2007s-grim-death-toll/>

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Every single one of these deaths is a tragedy. It is not clear how this bill would improve the county's ability to address this ongoing crisis.

We ask the county delegation to give this bill an unfavorable report. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Dan Reed". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dan" and last name "Reed" clearly distinguishable.

Dan Reed
Regional Policy Director
Greater Greater Washington