

January 21, 2020



Sierra Club Howard County

RE: CR14 – Support

A comprehensive Pedestrian Walking Plan; like WalkHoward, fits into the Howard County Complete Streets Policy in conjunction with BikeHoward. Together these plans would benefit Howard County residents in many ways. Increased walkability improves pedestrian safety and encourages outdoor activity which improves health, well-being and mobility, while decreasing traffic, and the use of fossil fuels and their related adverse effect on air quality.

WalkHoward seeks to improve the walking network to increase accessibility and integration of pedestrian facilities with the transit service. The general goal is to give residents the ability to walk and or ride where they need to go to work or shop between village centers and neighborhoods and beyond.

Using the Walk Score system, Downtown Columbia scored a 52 which is just above 49- a car dependent area. This is the highest rating for any area in Howard County. We look forward to the raising of these scores across the county.

When residents walk to their destinations, it results in improved sense of community and supports local businesses. Regular walking increases awareness of local businesses and will lead to increased sales and foot-traffic in the store. A person walking by a shop is more inclined to stop in if they don't have the need to find parking. It also saves people time if they can stop in a store to pick up something on the way to their destination.

(personal life example)

Adopting WalkHoward is the next step towards improving health, sustainability and good community. We ask that you support CR14

Ian Knudsen
Transportation Chair, Howard County Sierra Club

Carolyn Parsa
Chair, Howard County Sierra Club



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

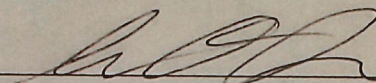
I, Carolyn Parsa, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Smarter Growth Alliance for Howard County to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding CB1 & CR14 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / ~~opposition to~~ / ~~request to amend~~ this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Carolyn Parsa

Signature: 

Date: January 21st 2020

Organization: Smarter Growth Alliance for Howard County (Preservation Maryland)

Organization Address: 3600 Clipper Mill Rd, 248, Baltimore, MD 21211

3600 Clipper Mill Rd, 248, Baltimore, MD 21211

Number of Members: 20 member organizations representing over 30,000 HoCo Residents

Name of Chair/President: Kimberly Golden Brandt

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American Heart Association.

Life is Why®

Bill No: CR-14-2020
Title: Resolution adopting WalkHoward, the Howard County Pedestrian Master Plan and authorizing the Office of Transportation to publish WalkHoward.
Position: SUPPORT

We appreciate all the great work by the County Executive and his administration to complete the Howard County Pedestrian Master Plan, known as WalkHoward. We fully support these efforts to create a more walkable Howard County and we appreciate the opportunity to provide input on the draft plan and that the administration was receptive to many of our suggestions.

In particular, we applaud the inclusion of a project prioritization process that will build sidewalks and pedestrian facilities that are safer and compliant with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA). We also appreciate that this plan will utilize the Vulnerable Populations Index (VPI) and performance measures included in the Complete Streets Policy (CR120-2019) that will yield greater coordination and accountability. We urge you to use these methods to implement pedestrian projects in areas like Guilford, Elkridge, Savage and Jessup, where upgrades to sidewalks, crosswalks, bus landing pads and paths have lagged for far too long.

As you operationalize this plan, we recommend you consider the following: add more robust performance metrics and a detailed action plan, publish a public report card to ensure accountability and conduct an internal analysis of the capacity to implement the overall plan. As we move forward, we urge you to take these measures into consideration.

Executing WalkHoward will require significant investment and planned funding over the next several years. As the FY 2021 budget process continues, we hope to see a more robust investment in building and improving sidewalks, crosswalks and other projects to improve safety and connectivity for pedestrians. Then, we need to follow with swift action. As is noted in this plan, the 2007 Pedestrian Master Plan is largely unfinished. While we know bringing such a plan into reality takes a lot of time and money, if we are committing to adopting this Pedestrian Master Plan, we must commit to actually executing it, and in a timely fashion. We must make real, tangible changes that people can see and use, starting in neighborhoods that need it most.

The Horizon Foundation and the American Heart Association have long supported efforts to make our community more walkable and improve public health. We urge you to adopt WalkHoward, keeping in mind these suggestions for improvements, and then proceed by fully funding and implementing projects expeditiously. Thank you for your consideration.



200 St. Paul Place, #2510 | Baltimore, MD 21202
1-866-542-8163 | Fax: 410-895-0269 | TTY: 1-877-434-7598
aarp.org/md | mdaarp@aarp.org | twitter: @aarpmaryland
facebook.com/aarpmid

AARP Maryland is honored to present written testimony to the Howard County Council in support Walk Howard's pedestrian plan as we have long supported efforts to create livable communities that include safe, walkable streets and access to transit options.

Our members and volunteers in Howard County have learned, through their personal experiences, the critical importance of a walkable neighborhood on an individual's mental and physical health. The effects of walking on our physical and emotional wellbeing is critical to the prevention of social isolation in older adults which, by all accounts...is a death sentence.

Howard County boasts many beautiful and safe pathways, yet so many residents do not have the same benefit of safe travel by foot. We have a long way to go, and through our collaboration with the Horizon Foundation and other local advocates, we have learned that the need for significant investment in building and improving sidewalks, crosswalks and other projects that improve pedestrian safety and connectivity, is critical.

With that, on behalf of AARP Maryland's 870,000 members statewide, we thank you for your consideration in adopting the Walk Howard pedestrian plan. Moving Howard closer to pedestrian and bicycle safety for all of Howard County's residents including older adults, is surely a model for all Maryland communities to pursue.

AARP is a nonpartisan, nonprofit, nationwide organization that helps people turn their goals and dreams into real possibilities, strengthens communities and fights for the issues that matter most to families such as healthcare, employment and income security, retirement planning, affordable utilities and protection from financial abuse.

Real Possibilities



HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION

I, Jennifer Arice White, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Horizon Foundation to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding CR14 - 2020 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Jennifer A. White

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: January 21, 2020

Organization: Horizon Foundation

Organization Address: 10221 Wincopin Cir, Suite 300

Columbia, MD 21044

Number of Members: 18

Name of Chair/President: Nikki Highsmith Vernick

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Aria Ma

CR-14

Tuesday, 21 January 2020

Public Testimony for CR-14

There are rare days in Maryland where the weather is just right; the temperature is not too cold or hot, it is not sticky or dry outside, and you can smell the color of the changing seasons. On one of these rare days, I was walking my dog in my neighborhood, a mere 40 feet from my house, where I was almost run over. My neighborhood only has sidewalks for the new tract housing plots of land, the cookie cutter houses, and these sidewalks abruptly end when they meet the intersection roads to older homes. The passing of CR-14 will adopt the WalkHoward Pedestrian Master Plan and allow the Office of Transportation to publish WalkHoward. This passing will provide a framework for improving structural conditions for people walking in Howard County and promote them as safe and convenient travel options.

The Pedestrian Master Plan benefits all residents of Howard County, but most importantly it provides a safer structure for the handicapped, senior citizens, and children to move freely in neighborhoods without worry of injury. Not only would it increase walkability and encourage residents to walk between neighborhoods instead of drive, but it would also improve health, decrease traffic and the use of fossil fuels, and diminish Howard County's carbon footprint. WalkHoward seeks to expand the first Pedestrian Master Plan that only addressed gaps and inconsistencies in the county's pedestrian network by prioritizing improvements near transit facilities, commercial areas, and sites serving senior citizens. This resolution will focus on the population's well being and address the larger issue of climate change and how we, as a county, can decrease our carbon footprint.

Although the Walk Score system has determined that there are no current communities in Howard County that score higher than 52 compared to Baltimore City's score of 98, it is important to take into consideration the variety of communities that exist in our county. Howard County is home to population dense destinations, such as Downtown Columbia that attracts residents from all over the county for festivities, and sparsely populated areas such as Ilchester and Clarksville that appeal to residents more interested in local stores and activities. Although it

may take more resources to connect these population dense destinations to sparsely populated areas, the larger issue at hand is the lack of pedestrian walkways for neighborhoods right next to each other. Many of these isolated communities such as Ilchester and Clarksville lack a safe transportation method for just a couple minutes down the street. Many students who go to the same school but live in different neighborhoods require a car to travel a mere ten minutes away because it is not safe to walk on the shoulder of the road.

The passing of CR-14 enhances the lives of all residents in Howard County, humans and furry friends alike. Some neighborhoods are complete islands despite sharing the same access roads or intersections. By focusing on integrating accessible pedestrian and bike routes that connect communities of the county together, it will achieve not just a sense of unity, but also encourage exercise, cultivate neighborly relationships, decrease our carbon footprint, and most importantly, keep the residents safe.

Thank you for your time.

where redistricting controversy and discontent can be avoided in the foreseeable future. Redistricting, renovation, and construction takes extra time, resources, and most importantly, funds. These solutions to overcrowding are reactive, and reactive approaches only work so long before a new solution must be found to adjust to new situations. This bill allows for a more proactive approach, preventing a problem from happening before it even occurs. Passing this bill means that for current schools, the county will have more time to accrue necessary funds and enact detailed, fool-proof plans for renovation or new construction.

However, most importantly, this bill will help new students who enroll in the school system. Although some of my friends who were redistricted still reside in Howard County, and social media exists, I lost those important bonds in elementary school, rare friendships that can only be made and thrive in the spotlight of carefree childhood innocence. This bill will create a more positive and supportive environment for rising middle and high school students, allowing friend groups to stay connected, student and teacher relationships to flourish, and individual self-esteem and comfort to confidently prosper.

Thank you for your time.

Aria Ma

CB1-2020

Tuesday, 21 January 2020

Public Testimony for CB1-2020

I remember back in fourth grade, many of my friends were moving across the street from Talbott Springs to Stevens Forest in the coming year. Confused and upset, I lost rare friendships and did not understand why. Now, eight years later, as a junior at Centennial High, I have discovered redistricting to be a large controversy that not only upsets affected parents and students, but requires months of amicable discussion to find a viable solution between county executives who share different perspectives. The current law for the school capacity test states that if a development fails the test for three consecutive years, then on the fourth year, development is allowed to move forward in the approval process. CB1-2020 changes the number of years from four to seven.

Let me provide two scenarios. Scenario A describes a student who fails Precalculus I three consecutive years in a row, but is allowed to move onto Calculus AB the following year. Scenario B describes a student who fails Precalculus I three consecutive years, but is given more time, more resources, and more help in understanding the basics of the course in order to master it before moving onto Calculus AB. Scenario A negatively impacts the student's self-esteem, frustrates them to an inexplicable degree, and hurts their ability to understand complicated concepts when they have not understood the basics. It also reduces their capability to accomplish their future goals and sets them up for failure. Scenario B provides more time, resources, and aid in order for the student to understand the basics; creating a strong foundation and support system for their future. Scenario A is the current law, scenario B is CB-1. The current law negatively affects students, where some have to completely restart their social lives, an intimidating and often difficult endeavor for this stage of human development. Redistricting seems to be the go-to solution for overcrowding, where student self-esteem may suffer, social interaction decrease, and academic achievement diminish in a new environment.

Adjusting this wait time is not just a tool to pace development for new buildings, but is also a more economical system that allows current schools to prepare a more efficient solution



**HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL
AFFIDAVIT OF AUTHORIZATION
TO TESTIFY ON BEHALF OF AN ORGANIZATION**

I, Jan Knudsen, have been duly authorized by
(name of individual)

Sierra Club to deliver testimony to the
(name of nonprofit organization or government board, commission, or task force)

County Council regarding CB 1 & CR 14 to express the organization's
(bill or resolution number)

support for / opposition to / request to amend this legislation.
(Please circle one.)

Printed Name: Jan Knudsen

Signature: [Handwritten Signature]

Date: 21 January 2020

Organization: Sierra Club

Organization Address: 7338 Baltimore ~~Blvd~~ Ave #101A
College Park, MD 20740

Number of Members: _____

Name of Chair/President: Carolyn Pansa

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