

P.O. Box 81  
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**OXON HILL BICYCLE & TRAIL CLUB, INC.**

April 1, 2005

**TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 551**

***Vehicle Laws - Bicycles and Motor Scooters - Exceptions to Requirement to Stay***

The Oxon Hill Bicycle and Trail Club was founded 33 years ago to promote bicycling in Southern Maryland. The club has over 200 members who bicycle regularly for transportation, recreation, health, and physical fitness. We encourage members and other cyclists to ride in a safe manner and to be considerate of other road users.

The club has a very good safety record. We encourage cyclists to follow the rules of the road and to be visible and predictable.

We also support SB-551 which would expand the exceptions to Maryland's law requiring cyclists in the roadway stay as near to the right as practicable. It is often not as safe to ride as far to the right as possible and Maryland law should have additional exceptions making it clear that this is the case.

A cyclist riding farther to the left is more visible and has more space to take evasive action when unexpectedly encountering road hazards or turning motorists. In travel lanes too narrow for safe passing by another vehicle, a cyclist away from the right edge of the roadway is less likely to be side-swiped or run off the road by another vehicle attempting to pass improperly.

A cyclist traveling straight through an intersection should be allowed to be to the left of right turn only lanes. A cyclist traveling at the same speed as other traffic is safest when operating in the flow of traffic, and therefore any requirement to stay right should apply only apply when the cyclist is traveling less than the speed of other traffic at that time and place.

Thank you for your support of legislation that encourages safe bicycling. Please support SB-551.

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