

Legislation Text

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Calling upon the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to pass HB140, the Parking Protected Bike Lane and Plaza bill, to empower municipalities to buffer bike lanes with parking on state roads.

WHEREAS, Thousands of pedestrians and cyclists are injured each year in crashes with automobiles, too many of which result in death; and

WHEREAS, A pedestrian is twice as likely to be killed by an automobile traveling 30 miles per hour versus one at 25, and three times as likely at 40 miles per hour; and

WHEREAS, Under current Pennsylvania law, vehicles must park along a state roadway within 12 inches of the curb, a rule that does not provide an allowance for parking next to bike lanes or along plazas, and was written years prior to their becoming standard engineering designs; and

WHEREAS, This mandate limits the ability of local jurisdictions to implement certain road designs proven to protect vulnerable users, including people with limited mobility as well as pedestrians, bicyclists, and motorcyclists, or from experimenting with road configurations in accord with their best engineering judgment; and

WHEREAS, To address this situation, Rep. David Maloney (Berks) has introduced legislation in recurring sessions to fix it, the most recent of which is House Bill 140, the Parking Protected Bike Lane and Plaza bill; and

WHEREAS, The legislation is also known as “Susan and Emily’s Law” after Susan Hicks, of Pittsburgh, and Emily Fredricks, a Philadelphia resident, each of whom were struck and killed by vehicles while cycling, and whose respective families are supporters of HB140; and

WHEREAS, Cities like York, Harrisburg Lancaster, and Pittsburgh, along with our own, would like to be able to install parking-protected bike lanes and pedestrian plazas; and

WHEREAS, Existing experience with these on city roads, very much including Philadelphia’s own, have shown to lower vehicle speed, reduce collisions and injuries, greatly enhance the number of people cycling, without increasing travel times; and

WHEREAS, Already, safety projects on PennDOT roads have been delayed or had their scope diminished as this change is considered in the hopes that it will be enacted; and

WHEREAS, Parking separated bike lanes are crucial to achieving Low-Stress Networks, connected bike lanes that do not expose users to vehicles traveling at significant speed, and which provide both the reality and the perception of a safe, equitable transportation option that will reduce pollution, increase commerce, and promote health and community; and

WHEREAS, This legislation has the support of PennDOT's Pedestrian and Pedalcycle Advisory Committee (PPAC) and the Bicycle Coalition of Philadelphia, among others; and

WHEREAS, People using Pennsylvania roadways deserve the safety offered by substituting an archaic phrasing with language that allows local jurisdictions to adopt best traffic engineering practices, with innumerable other benefits; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Does hereby call upon the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania to pass HB140, the Parking Protected Bike Lane and Plaza bill, to empower municipalities to buffer bike lanes with parking on state roads.