

America Walks • American Heart Association • American Planning Association •
American Public Health Association • American Society of Landscape Architects • Association of
Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals • Association of State Public Health Nutritionists •
League of American Bicyclists • National Association of Chronic Disease Directors •
National Recreation and Park Association • PeopleForBikes • Rails-to-Trails Conservancy •
Safe Kids Worldwide • Safe Routes Partnership • Safe States Alliance • Sierra Club •
Transportation for America • Trust for America's Health

March 29, 2021

The Honorable Julia Brownley
United States House of Representatives
2262 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adriano Espaillat
United States House of Representatives
1630 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Brownley and Representative Espaillat,

The undersigned organizations are writing to thank you for introducing H.R.508: The Safe and Friendly for the Environment Streets Act, or SAFE Streets Act. As organizations promoting public health and physical activity, we know that one of the easiest ways for people to get more physical activity is to walk, bike, and roll as part of their daily lives, whether that be walking to their transit stop, rolling to the store to pick up groceries, or biking around their neighborhood for recreation.

Polls show that while the majority of people would like to bike, walk, and roll more, they don't feel safe doing so. Statistics show their concerns are justified. Today, 20 percent of all traffic fatalities are people walking, biking, and using mobility devices such as wheelchairs and scooters. And yet states spend *less than one percent* of their Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to improve safety for vulnerable road users. And the problem is getting worse: bicycling and walking fatalities have increased both in real numbers and as a percentage of overall traffic fatalities. These injury and fatality rates are disproportionately higher in under-resourced communities, which already suffer other compounding mobility and health disparities.

The SAFE Streets Act would ensure that states address these fatalities by requiring investment in sidewalks, crosswalks, bike lanes, lighting, traffic calming, and other proven safety enhancements in dangerous areas. It also ensures that metropolitan planning organizations are consulted to identify dangerous areas within their borders and potential solutions to address them. Because local governments work closely with their residents, they understand where near misses happen and where convenient travel routes may be avoided because of lack of safe infrastructure. The SAFE Streets Act honors that expertise and local need.

Thank you again for your leadership in addressing the safety of vulnerable users. We look forward to working with you to ensure our transportation system is safe for everyone!

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