



March 15, 2021

To
The Montgomery County Council
100 Maryland Avenue
Rockville, MD 20850

**Re: 9-21 – Streets and Roads – Sidewalk Snow Removal – Amendments,
Position: Support**

Dear Montgomery County Council members,

“Snow days” are a privilege not afforded to most people who work essential jobs, many of whom use transit to report to work. As county plows diligently clear roadways to allow cars and buses to safely pass, they unfortunately create new hazards in the large piles of compacted snow and ice they deposit onto adjacent sidewalks. In our focus to provide safe roads for cars and buses, we have ignored and made more unsafe the access to those buses for pedestrians. We need our actions to match our words and provide **equitable** services for all county residents, irrespective of their mode of mobility.

Sierra Club Montgomery County Group supports Councilmember Evan Glass’s Bill 9-21 – Streets and Roads – Sidewalk Snow Removal – Amendments, which proposes that, for snowfall events exceeding 3-inches, the County clear sidewalks along an additional 19 major traffic arteries.

This bill is aligned with Sierra Club's priority and Montgomery County's Vision Zero goal for pedestrian safety.

Today, MCDOT clears sidewalks in urban districts and about 60 miles of sidewalks outside these areas during heavy snow storms. This bill would add approximately 40 more miles of sidewalks. As an example, the two longest proposed corridors are heavily used transit-routes:

Randolph Rd (from John F Kennedy HS to Rock Creek)
About 3 miles long with 6 miles of sidewalk
72 bus stops along this route (Ride On = 39 stops, Metro = 33 stops)

Old Georgetown Rd (from Arlington Rd to Democracy Blvd)
About 3 miles long with 6 miles of sidewalk
51 bus stops along this route (Ride On = 20 stops, Metro = 31 stops)

While this bill would add to an already constrained county budget, these kinds of snow events have not been that frequent and the snow clearing work could be contracted out.



For reference, this chart shows the heaviest DC snowfall over the past 10 years.

Inches	Date	Inches	Date
0.2	Jan 18, 2020	5.9	Feb 13, 2014
8.3	Jan 13, 2019	1.4	Mar 25, 2013
4.1	Mar 21, 2018	0.6	Jan 21, 2012
1.5	Dec 9, 2017	5.0	Jan 26, 2011
11.3	Jan 23, 2016	9.1	Feb 6, 2010
4.8	Mar 5, 2015		

For purposes of equity, supporting the vision zero goal of pedestrian safety and ensuring accessibility to public transit, Sierra Club urges the County Council to pass this bill.

Thank you.

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