

## **Rep. Jamie Raskin's Statement before the T&I Committee Member Day Hearing**

Thank you, Chairman Graves and Ranking Member Larsen, for holding this hearing today.

As you draft the bipartisan Surface Transportation Reauthorization bill, I ask you to include H.R. 2011, the bipartisan Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Active Transportation Safety Act, to promote roadway safety.

This legislation is named in honor of my constituent, Sarah Debbink Langenkamp. Sarah was a beloved wife, mother, and a distinguished American diplomat who was evacuated from Ukraine in the summer of 2022. Just weeks after leaving a war zone, she was struck by a vehicle and killed while riding her bike to her kids' school in Bethesda, Maryland.

This catastrophe in the life of her family and our community is a small part of America's broader roadway safety crisis. Today in America, pedestrian deaths are almost the highest they have been in 40 years, and a record number of **over 1,160** American cyclists were killed on our roads in 2023.

Sarah's death, along with thousands more, could have been prevented by building pedestrian and cyclist safety features on roadways. To first address pedestrian and cyclist safety, Congress established the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) as the primary federal source of funding for local cycling and walking projects.

However, despite the obvious need and expressed demand for this funding, large portions of TAP funds go unclaimed each year because the program's requirements are too onerous for many small, underserved, and rural communities.

My commonsense legislation will streamline the process by which local governments acquire federal funding to install safety measures for pedestrians and bicyclists on dangerous roadways.

The bill is bipartisan and bicameral and is designed to help local governments address urgent transportation safety needs without creating any new federal programs, any new regulations, or any new spending.

The Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Active Transportation Act is at its core a public safety bill. The legislation expands the definition of Highway Safety Improvement Projects to include more cyclists and pedestrian safety features and offers flexible financing to ensure small and rural communities can participate in the Transportation Alternatives Program. It enables more communities to install life-saving roadway features that will reduce mortality rates on our roadways for drivers, cyclists and pedestrians.

This simple legislative solution was developed with technical assistance from the Federal Highway Administration, features strong bipartisan support in both the House of Representatives and the Senate and is endorsed by leading advocates for roadway safety such as the Safe Routes Partnership.

I'd like to thank Congressmen Mike Thompson, Bryan Steil, and Derrick Van Orden for co-leading this important legislation.

I'd also like to take a moment to recognize Dan Langenkamp, Sarah's husband, and Admiral Dirk Debbink, Sarah's father. Both men have become inspirational champions for roadway safety, working nonstop to honor Sarah's memory and save American lives.

Thank you for hosting this hearing and for your consideration of this request.

I yield back.