



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-4905

April 28, 2025

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary
United States Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Secretary Duffy:

On August 25, 2022, Sarah Debbink Langenkamp, a wife, proud mother of two boys, and 17-year U.S. foreign service officer was tragically killed when a flatbed truck collided and crushed her while she was riding a bicycle along an unprotected bike lane in Bethesda, Maryland.¹ Sarah's tragic death highlights the imperative need to make our roadways safer for all who travel them, specifically bicyclists and pedestrians.

While the connection of two or more segments of existing bicyclist or pedestrian infrastructure as a highway safety improvement project is not explicitly named in the definition of "highway safety improvement project" under DOT's Highway Safety Improvement Program (HSIP),² it is a reasonable interpretation of the projects listed to include connecting two existing projects where there is a gap. This interpretation would allow connecting projects for bicyclist or pedestrian infrastructure to make use of HSIP funding. This lack of safety support puts America's cyclists and pedestrians in unnecessary danger during infrastructure improvement projects.

Legislation has been introduced clarifying the connection of two segments of existing bicyclist or pedestrian infrastructure as eligible for HSIP funding, the Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Active Transportation Safety Act,³ and I intend to make language clarifying the use of such funding my top priority in the upcoming Surface Transportation Reauthorization. However, in an effort to save lives in the meantime, I request that the Department of Transportation issue rulemaking or guidance allowing Federal Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to support safety measures for Vulnerable Road Users when two existing projects are being connected. This will provide additional safety measures to aid in the protection of cyclists and pedestrians.

¹ Theresa Vargas, *A U.S. diplomat left Ukraine, only to die on a Washington-area road*, The Washington Post, August 31, 2022. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2022/08/31/sarah-langenkamp-bicyclist-killed/>.

² 23 U.S.C. §148 (a)(4)(B)

³ H.R. 2011, Sarah Debbink Langenkamp Active Transportation Safety Act, 119th Cong. (2025). <https://www.congress.gov/bills/119th-congress/house-bill/2011/text>.

Thank you for your attention to this issue. I look forward to working with you and the Department of Transportation in honoring Sarah's life by making transportation safer for all Americans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Scott Fitzgerald". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Scott Fitzgerald
Member of Congress