

Testimony of Richard and Laura Fredricks

HB 140 – Parking Protected Bike Lane and Pedestrian Plaza Bill (Susan and Emily’s Law)

March 24, 2022

We would like to thank Chairman Langerholc, Chairman Flynn, and the members of the Senate Transportation Committee for considering HB140, the Parking Protected Bike Lane and Pedestrian Plaza Bill (Susan and Emily’s Law).

The day our family was torn apart was November 28, 2017. This was the day our 24 year old daughter, Emily, was killed by the driver of a sanitation truck while she was cycling to work in Philadelphia. She was killed tragically, traumatically and her death was preventable, as are most traffic deaths. Emily was kind, funny, she was not afraid to be loved or to show her love. She was creative, she loved to hold hands, and we have lost the sunshine of our lives. Emily’s two brothers, Michael and Jack, are devastated by the loss of their beloved sister, and we, as parents, miss Emily every second of every day. They say when a parent has lost their child, they have lost their future. What truth to those words. The human heart was not designed for such heartbreak.

We have taken our grief, sadness and anger and are advocating for safe streets. Nothing will bring Emily back to us, but the advocacy work we do is for the living. Everyone, everyone deserves to get to their destination alive.

HB140, the Parking Protected Bike Lane and Pedestrian Plaza Bill (Susan and Emily’s Law), was passed unanimously out of the State House’s Transportation Committee on February 4, 2021 and it passed the House on a unanimous vote on March 17, 2021. HB 140 has been introduced in some form the last three General Assembly Sessions (five years). This bill will be one step in keeping cyclists safe from vehicles. Paint is not infrastructure or protection. We need the right infrastructure in places for drivers to make clear and correct choices to keep vulnerable road users safe from death or serious injuries.

Let this be the first of many changes that will keep all of those who use our roads safe. Every day that there is delay in making common sense improvements to our roads is another day that someone may lose their life, their future, their promise. Put yourself in our shoes, and ask yourself who are you willing to lose as you decide on how you will vote.

On January 27 of this year, United States Secretary of Transportation Pete Buttigieg announced the first nationally recognized goal of Zero Traffic Deaths. “Our goal is this: Zero. Zero traffic deaths.” Pennsylvania residents deserve to live with the Safe Systems Approach, recognizing that people make

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mistakes, so the transportation system should be designed and operated to be human-centric and accommodate human vulnerabilities.

The Covid Pandemic has certainly revealed that even though there were less vehicles on the roads, traffic fatality numbers rose, as more vulnerable people used our streets. Please help us to keep those people safe and alive, so that their families can continue to thrive, and not be destroyed by traffic violence.

Sincerely,

/s/ Richard and Laura Fredricks

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