

May 8, 2023

Dear Members of the St. Louis County Council,

We are writing to you on behalf of the members of the Community Mobility Committee of the City of St. Louis to express our concern regarding Bill 86. First, we applaud the St. Louis County Council for prioritizing and taking action on pedestrian safety in the County. As neighbors, we support efforts to make the roadways safe for all users. However, we strongly urge you to consider actions that are targeted at reducing collisions without criminalizing people who are simply trying to get from place to place. [Many cities across the country are repealing bills against jaywalking](#). If you want to improve pedestrian safety, further study is required on what actually impacts safety.

The Community Mobility Committee of the City of St. Louis is an advisory group made up of residents who are committed to creating a safer, more accessible experience for people who are getting around by walking, transit, biking, and other modes of transportation. In our meetings and our work, we hear from residents across the region who are afraid to drive across town, to ride their bike to the park, or to cross the street in their own neighborhood. Though we are St. Louis City focused, many City of St. Louis residents travel to and through St. Louis County for various reasons. Therefore, we write to you in hopes of improvements to pedestrian safety in St. Louis County.

Across St. Louis County, there are many streets and roads that do not have adequate infrastructure for walking, including missing sidewalks, crosswalks and lights that are exceptionally far apart, and other conditions. It is not possible for people who are getting around by walking or transit to consistently use sidewalks, and making it a crime for them to try to get to work, school, or home does nothing to improve the safety of our region. This proposed law opens the door for harassment by law enforcement and people driving, when what would truly make people safer is better infrastructure across the region.

There are many tools and resources that can guide changes that actually create safe and efficient travel, reducing traffic fatalities and serious injuries. For example, FHWA has a guide for developing a Pedestrian Safety Action Plan. East-West Gateway Council of Governments is developing a Safety Action Plan for the St. Louis region and will take the "Safe Systems" approach to reduce serious injuries and fatalities. It is essential to understand that transportation systems have impacts beyond the local community, and the council's decisions can affect quality of life for their residents, neighbors and the entire region. Changes like review of land use policies and infrastructure do far more to increase safety than making it illegal to walk on the streets.

Lastly, we recommend that the Council explore best practices for educating the public on roadway usage. Education is an essential part of reducing traffic fatalities and injuries, and it can also help create safer and more efficient transportation systems.

Thank you,

Liz Kramer
Co-Chair, Community Mobility Committee

Christie Holland
Co-Chair, Community Mobility Committee