

## **FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT PEDESTRIAN ISSUES**

**Q: Isn't it already the law to stop for pedestrians?**

A: No. The current law per Sec. 46.2-924 of the Virginia Code specifies that drivers must "yield" to pedestrians in crosswalks. It goes on to stipulate the various methods by which a driver may yield, including "changing their course...or stop if necessary."

**Q: What's the difference between stop and yield?**

A: Under current code, yield doesn't guarantee a stop. It can be a variety of things including driving around the pedestrian. We need a simple, clear approach.

**Q: Why make this change in the law?**

A: The wording of the current law is subject to interpretation by the driver. We are trying to make the law clearer, to highlight it and make drivers and pedestrians more aware. Changing the wording to STOP unambiguously gives a priority to the pedestrian at the same time makes it clear to both the driver and pedestrian what is expected of each, so there is no confusion.

**Q: Pedestrians already just cross wherever they feel, stepping into traffic. How will this help?**

A: This law will make it safer and more predictable for pedestrians to cross at marked crosswalks which will encourage more pedestrians to utilize crosswalks as opposed to jaywalking or stepping out into traffic.

**Q: Won't this cause traffic to be disrupted?**

A: The proposed law requires **pedestrians** to observe law-enforcement or traffic control devices when attempting to cross. Knowing cars will be required to stop (as specified in the proposed legislation) will increase the predictability of traffic and pedestrian movement.

**Q: How do you enforce this?**

A: Local jurisdictions will have to determine the level of enforcement they want to provide. Education through the driver's manuals, education classes and other training opportunities for education should be encouraged.

**Q: Won't this lead to excessive crosswalks?**

A: Local jurisdictions are going to have to determine the right mix of crosswalks. This legislation is not intended to mandate a certain approach to crosswalks. Having safe crosswalks in convenient locations also has the potential to cut down on jaywalking.