



MARYLAND TRANSIT CAUCUS

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Hon. Kumar Barve, Chair
Appropriations Committee
Environment and Transportations Committee
House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

January 28, 2020

Re: HB 205 – Southern MD Rapid Transit Project – Requirements and Funding

Dear Chair McIntosh and Chair Barve:

The purpose of this letter is to express the support of the Maryland Transit Caucus for HB 205, Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project. *The Transit Caucus chose to not only endorse this legislation but to select this bill as one of our legislative priorities for the 2020 session.*

Southern Maryland has seen a rapid increase in population and vehicle miles travelled in recent years. The region has also been the subject of five separate state studies over the past three decades, all of which confirmed the need for greater transit access in the MD-5/US-301 corridor. The Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project would address this unmet transit demand, connecting southern Prince George's County and Charles County with the Washington D.C. Metro system.

We know that urban sprawl makes communities reliant on cars, degrades the environment, and contributes to public health inequities. This transit project would make the region less automobile dependent, unlocking economic opportunity in an environmentally sustainable way. We, recognize this corridor as a major transportation challenge and ask the state to take the next step in moving this project forward by funding the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) study. The NEPA study would secure a Record of Decision, finalize the project route and modality, and would unlock the ability to apply for federal funding. Without the NEPA study, this project will remain at a standstill.

The Transit Caucus recognizes that not all areas of the state are equitably served by public transit systems, and that Southern Maryland is long overdue for transit connectivity with the greater Washington region. The Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report for this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.