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**Testimony on HB 836  
Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024  
House Appropriations Committee**

**Date: March 6, 2024**

**Position: SUPPORT**

As an architect, urban designer with specialization in transit planning and strong supporter of smart growth I support **HB 836**.

Poor land use and sprawl contribute to the fact that Transportation is Maryland's and the nation's #1 source of GHG emissions. It must be addressed or we can't meet the state's goal of reducing emissions by 60% by 2031.

The **Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024** is a step towards aligning future transportation projects with Maryland's goals of reducing climate pollution.

**HB 836** would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and regional transportation planning agencies to measure and mitigate any increases in climate pollution and vehicle travel (measured as VMT: "Vehicle Miles Traveled") caused by planned highway expansion projects over \$10 million. Mitigation options may include improving and expanding public transportation, creating bike and pedestrian infrastructure, expanding broadband access, or other trip avoidance strategies. This legislation supports the Maryland [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan's](#) finding that a 20% per-capita reduction in VMT by 2050 is necessary for meeting the state's climate goals.

**As a member of the former MD Growth Commission's subcommittee on planning techniques and as a founding member of the 1000 Friends of MD as well as a former consultant to BMC on land use/transportation, I am keenly aware of the impact that land use has on VMT. Accounting for VMT will force smarter land use and better mode choices.**

In addition to reducing climate pollution, **HB 836** would reduce health impacts, reduce congestion and be more efficient. With Maryland facing a transportation budget crisis, it's critical to prioritize spending the state's scarce dollars on projects that align with its goals to reduce climate pollution, advance equity, and expand transportation choices.

I strongly urge a **favorable report on HB 836**.