



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education

## House Bill 836

Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects – Impact Assessments and Mitigation Plans  
(Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024)

Date: March 6, 2024	Position: <b>Support</b>
To: House Appropriations Committee	From: Doug Myers
House Environment and Transportation Committee	Maryland Senior Scientist

Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS HB 836**, which requires an impact assessment for transportation projects exceeding \$10 million. Analysis must include quantitative net change in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the sixth year after the project is complete as well as the quantification of vehicle miles traveled in the project area both directly and caused by an induced demand created by the project.

Maryland's Climate Pathway document identifies the transportation sector as second only to energy as a source of greenhouse gases. Highway expansion projects usually proceed from an analysis of transportation deficiencies such as traffic congestion, travel times, and general environmental impact of the project footprint without consideration of the vehicle miles traveled (VMT) or induced demand from the expanded transportation network.

The impact assessment required by HB 836 must determine that the project meets the following requirements:

- The project will not increase GHG emissions;
- The project will not increase vehicle miles traveled;
- The project conforms with the GHG emissions reduction targets specified in the Environment Article; and
- Meets vehicle miles traveled target in the 2024 Annual Attainment Report on Transportation System Performance.

There are provisions in the bill related to redesign that help ensure projects that do not adequately address these factors go back and do so. In addition, mitigation requirements also provided for in the bill for projects not able to be redesigned require a proportional reduction in quantified VMT or GHG through a comprehensive mitigation plan. This additional focus will evaluate whether highway expansion is the proper choice for addressing transportation deficiencies.

**CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on HB 836.**

For more information, please contact Matt Stegman, Maryland Staff Attorney, at [mstegman@cbf.org](mailto:mstegman@cbf.org).

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 200,000 members and e-subscribers, including 71,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.