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**MARYLAND ASPHALT ASSOCIATION**



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PRESIDENT:  
Tim Smith

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2024

Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
121 House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**RE: HB 842 – UNFAVORABLE – Environmental Justice – Investment in Infrastructure Construction Projects**

Dear Chair Barnes and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Asphalt Association (MAA) is comprised of 19 producer members representing more than 48 production facilities, 25 contractor members, 25 consulting engineer firms, and 41 other associate members. MAA works proactively with regulatory agencies to represent the interests of the asphalt industry both in the writing and interpretation of state and federal regulations that may affect our members. We also advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland's multimodal transportation system.

House Bill 842 requires Maryland state agencies to allocate a minimum of 40% of federal funds for infrastructure projects in underserved minority communities, and it establishes the Justice40 Committee that identifies such projects.

While MAA acknowledges the intent to address environmental justice concerns and promote equity in infrastructure investments, we believe that the proposed legislation imposes undue burdens on our industry. Mandating a minimum allocation of 40% of federal funds for specific projects will limit the flexibility of state agencies and undermine their ability to prioritize projects based on merit and need. The specific criteria in the bill may overlook other critical factors such as safety, economic viability, and long-term sustainability. Infrastructure projects should be evaluated holistically to ensure they meet the diverse needs of communities and contribute to Maryland as a whole.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on House Bill 842.

Sincerely,

Tim Smith, P.E.  
President  
Maryland Asphalt Association