



The Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
& Committee Members
House Environment & Transportation Committee
Room 251, Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Subject: HB 924 Transportation – Regional Transportation Authorities

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Rick Weldon, and I currently serve as the President/CEO of the Frederick County Chamber of Commerce. My personal history dealing with regional transportation issues includes two terms as a member of the Maryland House of Delegates representing southern Frederick and Washington County, a member of the Frederick County Board of County Commissioners, and service as a public administrator for both The City of Frederick and the City of Brunswick. I was also a 13-year commuter on I270 and the MARC rail system.

Those collective experiences, as a frustrated commuter, a town manager, an elected official and now as the voice of well over 900 member organizations at the Chamber heightens my desire to seek a different approach to the question of funding major transportation obligations, in all modal systems.

The bill currently before you may just be the missing tool in our toolbox. Northern Virginia has utilized a similar funding mechanism to advance critical surface and mass transit projects that would otherwise have been perpetually delayed.

Regardless of ideology or partisan perspectives, we can all agree that unless we change our fundamental approach, we'll continue to allow an already-unmanageable problem to worsen, we'll lose opportunities to appeal to major prospective employers, and worst of all, continue to degrade the quality of life for thousands of local commuters.

The budget crunch facing Maryland is real and serious. Everyone understands that, regardless of which side of the aisle you find yourself. Advancing this bill will allow ALL OF US to come together in a rational, forward-looking dialogue whose ultimate objective is to find a way to make Maryland's whole transportation continuum able to meet the demands and expectations of Maryland commuters.

I urge a favorable report on HB 924, so that we may begin this critical conversation.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Rick Weldon', is written over the typed name.

Richard B. Weldon, Jr.
President/CEO
Frederick County Chamber of Commerce