



**HoCoClimateAction.org**  
Howard County, Maryland

Testimony: HB0437 - Transportation – Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects and Impact Assessments (Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026)

Hearing Date: February 10, 2026

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Edelson

Committee: Appropriations

Submitting: Monica O'Connor for Howard County Climate Action

Position: Favorable

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser and Committee Members:

[HoCo Climate Action](#) is a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing approximately 1,400 subscribers. We are also a member of the [Climate Justice Wing](#) of the [Maryland Legislative Coalition](#). Our organization works with residents and ally organizations to promote a safe climate and clean energy future. Specifically, we have worked extensively on building electrification to help Maryland achieve its ambitious climate goals, including net-zero emissions.

We urge a favorable vote on HB437 - Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026

The Transportation and Climate Alignment Act focuses on improving the way we plan transportation projects so people have more choices to take transit, walk, bike, or spend less time in their car. It aims to both cut pollution from highway projects and also give Marylanders better access to jobs, food, and healthcare while helping reduce gas and maintenance costs. Transportation is Maryland's #1 source of climate pollution and the second largest expense behind housing. Maryland families deserve more affordable, accessible, and sustainable transportation choices. By prioritizing projects that expand public transit and active transportation infrastructure, the Transportation and Climate Alignment Act will ensure that every Marylander has equitable access to opportunities like jobs, education, and healthcare.

HB 437 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to measure the greenhouse gas emissions of all major transportation projects, and align the state's capital transportation budget with Maryland's climate goals, as required by the Climate Solutions Now Act. For major highway expansion projects over \$100 million, MDOT must offset pollution with cleaner transportation options - like public transit, bike paths, and pedestrian infrastructure - and prioritize investments in overburdened and underserved communities.

In addition to reducing climate pollution, HB 437 would protect our health, reduce traffic congestion, and save consumers money - [an average of more than \\$3,000 per household each year on vehicle costs](#). Investing in more efficient, lower-maintenance infrastructure can also reduce the state's long-term costs. New analysis shows Maryland could achieve approximately \$550 million per year in net savings by 2050 by building out bus rapid transit, protected bike lanes, and passenger rail.

We strongly urge a favorable report on HB437