



Empowering People to Lead Systemic Change
The Protection and Advocacy System for the State of Maryland

1500 Union Ave., Suite 2000, Baltimore, MD 21211
Phone: 410-727-6352 | Fax: 410-727-6389
DisabilityRightsMD.org

APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

HB 437: Transportation - Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects and Impact Assessments (Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026)

February 10, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM), the state's designated Protection and Advocacy agency, is charged with defending and advancing the rights of people with disabilities. DRM advocates for Marylanders with disabilities to have full access to our communities. Accessible public transportation and streetscapes are key components of community integration. We support the Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026 (TCA), as it expands safe, accessible, and affordable transportation and pedestrian options to improve access to employment, education, and healthcare across the state.

The TCA requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to consider climate impacts on major transportation projects, and pair significant highway expansion projects with multimodal investments to offset emissions. Many people with disabilities and older adults do not benefit from highway expansion because they are less likely to drive or own a car. Instead, they often rely on transit and active transportation to meet their transportation needs. HB 437 represents a significant step toward a transportation system that is inclusive of the needs of people with disabilities by encouraging state investment in accessible public transportation, pedestrian infrastructure, and micromobility.

The TCA prioritizes multimodal projects in overburdened and underserved communities. People with disabilities are often disproportionately represented in these areas and would significantly benefit from the TCA investments. The TCA is a pathway to eliminate systemic barriers and promote accessible communities for people with disabilities.

Marylanders with disabilities need accessible public transit and safe streets for independence, healthcare, employment, and community participation. DRM is excited that the bill recognizes accessible transportation and pedestrian improvements for people with disabilities, as well as micromobility, including adaptive and inclusive low-speed vehicles for people with disabilities, as eligible offsetting activities for highway expansion project

emissions. By including these measures, the bill helps ensure that transportation investments advance accessibility for people with disabilities.

For these reasons, DRM urges the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 437. Please do not hesitate to contact Daria Pugh, Attorney, Disability Rights Maryland at DariaP@DisabilityRightsMD.org, or by phone at (443) 692-2487, with any questions or comments.