



Date: February 6, 2026

Bill: HB 437- Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026

Position: Support

Dear Chair Barnes, Chair Korman, and Members of the Committees:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for HB 437. This legislation would improve planning and development of transportation projects by requiring that the Department of Transportation (DOT) evaluate major capital projects for their impact on greenhouse gas emissions, curb pollution and its associated costs from Maryland's current transportation systems, and increase investment in multimodal transportation.

One of the National Aquarium's three strategic conservation goals is to combat climate change. We do this through a holistic, solutions-focused approach, which includes communicating ocean and climate science, building resilience through community empowerment, implementing nature-based solutions, and reducing our own carbon footprint with a commitment to achieve net-zero Scopes 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035. Our organization has also started compiling Scope 3 emissions data, and roughly one-third of our staff rely on modes of transport other than individual motor vehicles for commuting to work.

Transportation is the top driver of Maryland's GHG emissions, most of which result from on-road vehicles powered by gasoline or diesel¹. Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction plan notes that transportation emissions reductions will require increased use of transit and other modes of transport. Promoting pedestrian-centered transportation infrastructure, expanding access to public transit, and creating bike lanes would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to transportation while saving Maryland commuters time and money. The National Aquarium appreciates the prioritization of overburdened and underserved communities in determining what qualifies as climate mitigation for transportation projects. This legislation better aligns transportation planning in Maryland with the state's climate goals and ensures that transportation remains a critical component of advancing environmental justice.

Now more than ever, the state of Maryland can and should build on its climate leadership. This legislation will better align future transportation investments with our ambitious and necessary climate goals, as similar legislation in California, Colorado, and Minnesota has already done. Modernizing our transportation infrastructure will yield positive environmental outcomes, improve public health, shorten commutes, and reduce transportation costs for Marylanders.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 437.

Contact:

Maggie Ostdahl

Director of Conservation Policy

410-385-8275

mostdahl@aqua.org

¹ [Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan – Transportation.](#)