Testimony in Support of House Bill 56 and Senate Bill 13

"Chesapeake Bay Bridge – Reconstruction Advisory Group and Traffic Study"

Traffic demand on the Route 50/301 Corridor between Route I-97 and the Route 50/301 split has risen to a level where chronic congestion is a regular occurrence at various locations during weekday AM and PM travel periods. The greatest choke point is at the "Bay Bridge." With a two-lane Eastbound span and a three-lane Westbound span. A dangerous reversable lane operation during normal PM peak hours occurs on the Westbound span where one lane is designated Eastbound and separated from the Westbound by nothing more than paint markings and overhead control lights. Replacement of these bridges based upon safety and chronic traffic congestion alone should have begun many years ago. Recent Structural analyses indicate that there remains a finite time before both Spans of the "Bay Bridge" will need to be replaced. We are now faced with an unfortunate situation where we must invest increasingly in maintenance and repair of structures that do not provide sufficient capacity nor do they meet minimum design standards for safe, high throughput traffic operations.

This proposed Chesapeake Bay Bridge – Reconstruction Advisory Group and Traffic Study is intended to configure a body of stake holders who can evaluate, recommend and oversee implementation of short-term traffic designs and methods to expedite and monitor traffic flows on the Bay Bridge and its approaches. The use of new and emerging technologies throughout the world is significant. It is essential that Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) technologies be deployed that not only monitor traffic but employ dynamic control systems to directly affect vehicular speed and platooning. Such systems do not require electronic vehicle /highway interface, are available now and can be implemented within months of a contract letting.

Critical to success for this group is the inclusion of the State Highway Administration (SHA) along with the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA). It is the SHA that must perform studies and implement Traffic control solutions. SHA understands the science of Traffic Engineering and the dynamics of corridor throughput analysis.

This Advisory Group will also look to the future as growth occurs and future alternatives and additional travel corridors become candidates for consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

David Humphreys

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