



As Vice Chair of Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance (SMTA), I would like to offer testimony to oppose HB258, a piece of legislation that is earmarked to hijack the P3 Traffic Relief Plan which is of paramount importance to the future economic health of the Washington region. It's time that legislators temporarily housed in Annapolis wake up and realize that they are out of touch with their constituents who are mired in traffic with little hope of near-term relief if bills such as these proceed. The future of the Traffic Relief Plan is sorely threatened by the tenets of this bill which would give Prince Georges County the ability to nix a regional transportation project that will provide congestion relief, economic development, safer roads and expanded transit service to all in the region as well as up and down the East Coast along I-95. Granting one jurisdiction the ability to veto an important Statewide transportation that seeks to improve the lives of so many is very short-sighted.

Continued efforts to delay the project only costs taxpayers millions of dollars in time lost, gas consumed and quality of life diminished. It is also amazingly short sighted in that it would be self-defeating for Prince George's County whose gridlock will continue, while jobs associated with both the construction project and future economic development opportunities will be threatened or will not materialize.

With the recently approved Beltway Accord in the books, we must not let the momentum created by that effort coupled with the two positive Board of Public Works votes on the Traffic Relief Plan be lost in the foibles of a bill as nonsensical as this one. Vote to oppose.

Jennifer Russel, Vice-Chair

Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance (SMTA)