



CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

*Environmental Protection and Restoration
Environmental Education*

Senate Bill 13

Chesapeake Bay Bridge – Reconstruction Advisory Group and Traffic Study

DATE: FEBRUARY 5, 2020

POSITION: SUPPORT

POSITION

The Chesapeake Bay Foundation requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 13 from the Finance Committee. SB 13 would direct the State to fully evaluate near-term techniques that could reduce traffic congestion at the Chesapeake Bay Bridge with minimal impacts on water quality.

COMMENTS

Traffic congestion on US 50 from Annapolis to Kent Island has raised the possibility of constructing a new bridge across the Chesapeake Bay. In the Fall of 2017, The Maryland Transportation Authority (MdTA) initiated a Tier I Environmental Impact Study to identify a location for a new vehicular crossing.

The draft materials from this study, along with past task force efforts, highlight the profound impacts that a new span could have on the health of the Chesapeake Bay and surrounding communities. MdTA's current study is not designed to address near-term traffic conditions at the Bridge. This leaves a significant gap in the information and options available to reduce congestion in the corridor over the next ten to 20 years.

SB 13 directs the State Highway Administration to study traffic reduction tools that may be implemented in the near term. The bill also establishes an advisory group of lawmakers, residents and experts to provide key stakeholder input on the study's recommendations. Specifically, the bill directs the State Highway Administration to evaluate the use of travel incentives and traffic control technologies to make the existing roadway more efficient.

Travel incentives and traffic control technologies can improve traffic conditions with minimal disruption to the local environment and nearby communities. SB 13 provides an opportunity for the State to fully investigate the potential for these strategies to improve traffic conditions in the US 50 corridor.

CONCLUSION

For these reasons, the Chesapeake Bay Foundation recommends a favorable report on SB 13 from the Finance Committee. For questions or more information, please contact Erik Fisher, Maryland Land Use Planner at 443-482-2096 or efisher@cbf.org.

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