



Of the Anacostia River

Testimony on SB 843: I-495 and I-270 Public-Private Partnership - Partnership Agreement - Requirements (Maryland Department of Transportation Promises Act of 2021)

Committee: Budget & Taxation

Position: Favorable

On behalf of the Neighbors of the Northwest Branch, a citizen organization dedicated to the ecological restoration of the Northwest Branch, I urge a favorable report on SB 843. We have heard many promises concerning the proposed expansion of the beltway and I-270, many of which seem to have fallen by the wayside as the project advanced. This bill would simply put into statute most of the verbal promises that Transportation Secretary Slater made regarding the project. Given the extensive damage the project would inflict on our parks, and on the Northwest Branch specifically, it is essential that at a minimum the promises be kept.

The bill specifies that the Board of Public Works may not approve a P3 agreement for the I-495 and I-270 project unless the agreement contains promises that Secretary Slater made for this project, including:

- No funding from taxpayers will be used to subsidize the project
- A federally-compliant final environmental impact statement will be available before MDOT asks the Board of Public Works to approve any contract
- Data used to estimate congestion relief, set tolls and inform other matters will be shared with local government planners
- 10% of toll revenue will be made available for transit priorities of Montgomery County and Prince George's County
- Public hearings will be held over toll amounts
- Buses and other transit will be able to use the toll lanes for free
- Bicycle/pedestrian lane(s) will be added to the American Legion Bridge
- MDOT will study the feasibility of Monorail along I-270
- No homes will be purchased before construction contracts are approved
- The project concessionaire will be required to initiate a community benefits agreement

We must assume that all of these promises were and are feasible, or Secretary Slater would not have made them. For the sake of our members and all Marylanders, I urge a FAVORABLE report for SB 843.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Anne Ambler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Anne" being more prominent than the last name "Ambler".

Anne Ambler, President
12505 Kuhl Road
Silver Spring, MD 20902
301-946-5599
anne@neighborsnwb.org