

February 24, 2021

**Testimony on SB 843
I-495 and I-270 Public-Private Partnership - Partnership Agreement - Requirements
(Maryland Department of Transportation Promises Act of 2021)
Budget & Taxation Committee**

Position: Favorable

My name is Christine Slater, I'm a resident of Montgomery County, and I support SB 843. It's time for Franchot, the BPW, and MDOT to Keep Their Promises. Recent announcements indicate contracting before completion of federally required environmental review. On June 5th, 2019, [Comptroller Franchot promised that taxpayers](#) would not be asked to incur a financial obligation for this project and **no contract would be signed before completing the required federal environmental review** of Governor Hogan's proposed \$11 billion tollway expansion. Yet, why is there now a [secretive](#) predevelopment arrangement before a completed environmental review process that contains a \$50 million dollar [payment to the developer](#) with taxpayer funds if the project doesn't go forward as planned?

The Maryland Department of Transportation Promises Act of 2021 would put into statute that the Board of Public Works may not approve a P3 agreement for the I-495 and I-270 project unless the agreement contains the promises that Secretary Slater made on this project. Some of these provisions include:

- 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

The Governor has made promises and these need to be kept. Instead, it feels like the state is rushing as quickly as possible to sign-seal-and-deliver a contract to Transurban before the Environmental Impact Statement is completed. The Governor is "rushing" this project through at high speed.

Rushing is the opposite of what is needed on such a risky, complex and enormous project surrounding our nation's capital that is going to be led by and concessioned to a private company for 50 years. Cutting corners is financially reckless and risks further harm to our environment and communities.

I encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.