

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

I, Jennifer Loss, support SB 843, the Maryland Department of Transportation Promises Act of 2021. This bill would put into statute the verbal promises that Transportation Secretary Slater made regarding the I-495 and I-270 expansion.

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 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
- 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

My personal support of this bill is rooted in the knowledge that better mass transit is the solution to our traffic woes, and in particular more safe cycling options, including protected lanes. These alternatives will lead to more bike commuting, and lower greenhouse gases and decrease congestion on the highways. I have lived in Maryland most of my life, and I am tired of seeing roads expanded, destroying natural habitat. These are irreversible decisions. We have some the worst traffic in the country, and expanding roads has not helped. It encourages more driving, more cars. This is a vicious cycle that sees no end.

I encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.
sincerely,

Jennifer Loss