



Testimony of the Rockville Mayor and Council Senate Bill 361 – Public-Private Partnerships – Process and Oversight Support

Good afternoon Chairman Pinsky and members of the Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to testify with the unanimous support of the Rockville City Council for SB 361.

We thank Senator Rosapepe for his leadership in bringing this Bill forward. While SB 361 would not impact the current I-270 and I-495 P3 projects, Rockville's experience with the current P3 initiative has brought to our attention numerous and serious flaws in the P3 process. For example, this massive public-private- partnership (P3) is totally in the hands of the Board of Public Works, a 3-member body, and the General Assembly has had little or no effective input into this initiative. Furthermore, there have been issues with transparency, including the recent information that the State taxpayers are already on the hook for millions if this project is delayed or cancelled.

The City of Rockville is the municipality most impacted by the I-270 and I-495 P3 project. Yet, we were blindsided a year ago when the announcement was made. Additionally – it has only been recently that the City has been included in discussions and information. Therefore, Rockville endorses provisions of SB 361 such as:

- The establishment of a Public-Private Oversight Review Board that would review any P3 over a certain large threshold.
- The explicit involvement of legislative budget committees.
- The several provisions that provide for transparency and clarity of process that have sorely been lacking from the current P3 process.

And we request that a provision be added that would require the State to include municipalities that are directly impacted by a P3 as a partner in the process.

SB 361 makes substantial improvements to the state's inadequate P3 process for public infrastructure assets. It creates safeguards that will protect taxpayers and provides the public with the opportunity to understand the real impacts of large-scale transportation P3 infrastructure. For these reasons, we urge this Committee to provide SB 361 with a favorable report and quickly advance it to the Senate floor for a vote. Thank you.