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February 2nd, 2022

Senator William C. Smith, Jr., Chair
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
2 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 266 – FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS – Department of Transportation – Vehicle Litter Reporting Program

Dear Chair Smith and Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee:

The Maryland Asphalt Association (MAA) is comprised of 18 producer members representing more than 47 production facilities, 24 contractor members, 24 consulting engineer firms and 41 other associate members. We proactively work with regulatory agencies to represent the interests of the asphalt industry both in the writing and interpretation of state and federal regulations that may affect our members. We also advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland's multimodal transportation system.

Senate Bill 266 would establish a Vehicle Litter Reporting Program within the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to operate a toll-free hotline to receive complaints of littering from motor vehicles and to notify the registered owners of vehicles of any littering complaints filed against them. This program and the related hotline would be funded out of the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF).

While Senate Bill 266's stated goal of reducing litter and protecting the environment is a laudable one, MAA has concerns about the funding mechanism used to operate the proposed program. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, the ensuing economic shutdown, and a massive decrease in overall travel statewide, projected TTF revenues have fallen dramatically over the past two years. Because the TTF is the only state revenue source for all MDOT, an increase in TTF expenditures in one area without an increase in revenue necessitates cuts in other areas. MAA's current position centers around the concern that the funds to operate Senate Bill 266's program would result in less money available to fund critical repairs to the roads and bridges that form the backbone of Maryland's transportation infrastructure. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, combined with traditional underfunding of the state's road maintenance needs, leads MAA to request that, should the body wish to implement this proposed program, another funding source apart from the TTF should be utilized.

We appreciate you taking the time to address this important issue, and we urge a favorable with amendments report on Senate Bill 266.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marshall Klinefelter".

Marshall Klinefelter
President
Maryland Asphalt Association