
February 6, 2024

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
121 House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Opposition – House Bill 711 – Consolidated Transportation Program – Indian Head Highway – Conversion into Limited Access Highway

Dear Chair Barnes and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) respectfully opposes House Bill 711 due to the significant fiscal impact and the circumvention of the established prioritization process.

House Bill 711 requires the Secretary of Transportation to: (1) include sufficient funds in the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) for fiscal year 2025 and beyond for the planning, design, and reconstruction necessary for the conversion of Maryland Route 210 (Indian Head Highway) in Prince George's County into a limited access highway; and (2) report to the General Assembly on a timeline and the estimated costs for this conversion.

The estimated fiscal impact of House Bill 711 to the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) is in excess of \$1 billion, exclusive of the impacts of inflation. This cost estimate comprises approximately: (1) \$500 million for the remaining work on the 6.5-mile northern segment, including five additional grade-separated interchanges south to Old Fort Road; and (2) project estimates for the additional 6.5 miles of grade-separation to the south. While the State Highway Administration (SHA) continues to pursue the 2004 corridor selected alternative that specified grade-separation and conversion to limited access for the northern 6.5 miles of MD 210, the southern segment of the project has not been studied. As such, House Bill 711 requires the State to commit over \$1 billion of its available TTF capacity to a single project, where construction has not been fully developed, and in the same year where budgetary constraints require significant reductions to major expansion projects that are construction ready. The fiscal impact of House Bill 711 would also translate to significant project impacts across SHA and MDOT's other modal administrations as funds would need to be reallocated from other projects to meet the requirements of this legislation.

House Bill 711 is also inconsistent with the CTP prioritization process, which is currently being evaluated pursuant to the recommendations of the Maryland Commission on Transportation Revenue and Infrastructure Needs, established by Chapter 455, Acts of 2023. The prioritization process is important for transportation project selection, to: (1) provide equal opportunity and due consideration to all candidate projects (2) make informed decisions; (3) make the most of limited resources; and (4) be transparent and accountable.

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Page Two

MDOT remains committed to improving the safety and mobility of all road users and looks forward to meeting with the sponsor to discuss current activities and future plans within the MD 210 corridor and opportunities for improvement.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant House Bill 711 an unfavorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Mickler
Division Chief, Legislative Services
State Highway Administration
410-545-5629

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090