



MARYLAND
Chamber of Commerce

LEGISLATIVE POSITION:

UNFAVORABLE

Senate Bill 681

**Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects - Impact Assessments and Mitigation Plans
(Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024)**

Senate Finance Committee

Wednesday, February 28, 2024

Dear Chairwoman Beidle and Members of the Committee:

Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 6,800 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic growth and recovery for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

Imposing the mandates outlined in Senate Bill 681 will bring highway capacity expansion to a halt, effectively eliminating many expansion projects. Highway congestion imposes significant costs on businesses due to increased transportation time and delays in the delivery of goods and services. These delays can disrupt supply chains, leading to increased operational costs and decreased efficiency. It is also important to consider that employees spend more and more time commuting to and from work. Unreliable commute times lead to lower worker productivity, hinder attraction of talent, and make access to jobs difficult for those lacking transport options. Maryland ranks in the bottom third nationally for per capita transportation infrastructure investment. As Maryland continues to grapple with persistent transportation infrastructure challenges that impact commute times and business operations, SB 681 will further negatively impact our highway system. Instead, the Chamber advocates for a multi-pronged transportation system.

As commutes lengthen and infrastructure funding lags behind, Maryland businesses and residents are facing barriers to inclusive economic growth and reduced quality of life. Efficient, dependable transportation unlocks growth opportunities for Maryland businesses and workers. Maryland's transportation infrastructure serves the backbone of our economy, facilitating access to jobs, supplies and services for individuals, and enabling businesses to reach more customers while also benefiting from the efficient movement of goods, services and people. The Chamber believes that improved transportation networks boost economic opportunity, and we work to advance short- and long-term solutions to statewide transportation needs. Highway expansion projects create jobs, generate economic activity and transform Maryland into a leader in 21st-century transportation solutions.

For these reasons, the Chamber respectfully requests an **unfavorable report** on **SB 681**.

MDCHAMBER.ORG

60 West Street, Suite 100, Annapolis 21401 | 410-269-0642