



February 28th, 2024

Senator Pam Beidle, Chair
Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: SB 681 – UNFAVORABLE – Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects – Impact Assessments and Mitigation Plans (Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024)

Dear Chair Beidle and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 200 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

Senate Bill 681 would create an additional process for all major highway capacity expansion projects where total costs would be over \$10 million, to include establishing a process for performing major highway capacity expansion project impact assessments that must be performed before a project may be included in the into the statewide transportation improvement program or the consolidated transportation program (CTP). If it is determined that the project will result in a net increase in greenhouse gas emissions or vehicle miles traveled, they must develop a mitigation plan to eliminate those net increases.

While MTBMA understands the importance of ensuring responsible and thorough assessments, we believe that the proposed legislation is unnecessary and redundant, as there are already processes in place with NEPA and the CTP and furthermore, it may have unintended consequences that could hinder essential infrastructure development. One of our primary concerns is the potential for increased bureaucracy and delays in project timelines. The proposed legislation appears to add a burdensome step to an already complex approval process, potentially discouraging investment in much-needed infrastructure improvements. Timely execution of such projects is essential to addressing the growing transportation needs of our State and ensuring the safety and efficiency of our roadways. Unnecessary delays and uncertainties could lead to increased costs, discourage private investments, and hinder economic development in our region.

We appreciate you taking the time to consider our request for an **UNFAVORABLE** report on SB 681.

Thank you,

Michael Sakata
President and CEO
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association