



# Transportation Alliance

February 28, 2024

## **Testimony on SB 681 – *Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024* – Finance Committee**

### **Position: Favorable**

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance supports SB 681, which will help to ensure that the state's transportation investments are better aligned with its climate and transportation goals.

SB 681 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and regional transportation planning agencies to measure and mitigate any increases in climate pollution and traffic caused by highway expansion projects over \$10 million. Mitigation options may include improving and expanding public transportation, creating bike and pedestrian infrastructure, expanding broadband access, or other smart growth strategies. This legislation supports the Maryland Climate Pollution Reduction Plan's finding that a 20% per-capita reduction in VMT by 2050 is necessary for meeting the state's climate goals.

In addition to reducing climate pollution, SB 681 would protect our health, reduce traffic congestion, save consumers money - an average of \$3,271 per household each year on vehicle costs - and make smart use of limited infrastructure dollars. With Maryland facing a transportation budget crisis, it's critical to prioritize spending the state's scarce dollars on projects that align with its goals to reduce climate pollution, advance equity, and expand transportation choices.

Transportation is Maryland's #1 source of climate pollution and must be addressed to meet the state's goal of reducing emissions 60% by 2031. The Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2024 will ensure that future transportation projects align with Maryland's goals of reducing climate pollution by expanding transportation options.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for Senate Bill 681.