

**Testimony on HB 84
Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2025
House Appropriations Committee**

Date: February 7, 2025

Position: SUPPORT

The Coalition for Smarter Growth (CSG) supports **HB 84**. Our organization advocates for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all. The **Transportation and Climate Alignment Act (TCA)** will ensure Maryland's transportation investments are aligned with its climate change mitigation goals and provide numerous benefits to the state's residents, workers, and communities.

Transportation is the number one source of the state's greenhouse gas emissions, accounting for 35% of its climate warming pollution, and most of it (82%) is from cars and trucks. Electric vehicles alone will not achieve Maryland's climate goals.

The TCA, HB 84, would advance equity and accessibility, and make smart use of our limited public dollars while reducing climate pollution. HB 84 provides a toolkit to evaluate planned transportation investments early on, and, if needed, make improvements to them by giving communities more options to connect residents to jobs and services, while providing accountability on the state's climate goals.

Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan estimates that the state must invest \$1 billion per year to meet its climate targets. For this reason, we can't afford to invest public money in transportation projects that take us backwards and cancel out the climate progress of the state's other investments. Climate-oriented transportation investments have the additional benefits of providing more transportation options, increasing safety, and saving families money.

In addition to fostering travel options, **HB 84** encourages the linking of jobs, housing, services and infrastructure investments to provide more compact, attractive, and competitive communities for doing business and creating a home. This approach has been key to attracting and retaining Fortune 500 firms like Marriott and Choice Hotels, not to mention the FBI, to transit-oriented locations. These walkable, accessible places also lower the combined cost of housing plus transportation – a better indicator of affordability than housing costs alone.

Prince George's County has built an economic development strategy around its transit stations with a major focus on the Blue Line corridor, and Montgomery County has made its bus rapid transit, Metro and Purple Line corridors focus areas for economic development. The **TCA, HB 84**, ensures Maryland designs and selects transportation projects that support these climate-friendly, competitive economic centers.

We ask for a **favorable report for HB 84** by the committee. Thank you.