



Hon. Ben Barnes, Chairman  
Appropriations Committee  
120 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Hon. Mark Chang, Vice Chair  
Appropriations Committee  
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**Organization:** ACEC/MD

**Bill:** HB84 - Transportation - Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects and Impact Assessments (Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2025)

**Position:** Favorable with Amendments

Chairman Barnes, Vice-Chair Chang and Members of the Committee,

The American Council of Engineering Companies/MD (ACEC/MD) is the representative organization for approximately 90 consulting engineering firms of various sizes across the state. These firms play a crucial role in serving both the public and private sectors by actively participating in the design and development of essential infrastructure such as public water and wastewater systems, bridges, highways, building structures, and environmental projects.

Our organization's member firms collectively employ approximately 7,000 individuals statewide, and approximately forty percent of ACEC/MD's membership is comprised of certified small, minority-owned, or women-owned businesses, reflecting our commitment to diversity and inclusion within the engineering industry.

We support the bill's general intent to align transportation projects with environmental considerations and to promote sustainable development. We understand that the bill's sponsor is actively working on amendments to address these issues, and we look forward to working with him.

However, as drafted, we have concerns that the requirements outlined in the bill may slow down project timelines, introduce additional layers of bureaucracy, and impact federal funding for transportation initiatives.

Under this bill, MDOT **must** fund elements of the multimodal transportation program concurrently with funding for the construction of the major highway capacity expansion project. However, if the State does not have the funds, it will stall out the necessary capacity expansion and potentially lose federal funding. **The capacity expansion being contingent on the offsetting project funding will cause major issues.**

As stated in the fiscal note **“Mitigation efforts to counteract this increase in VMT could total hundreds of millions or even billions of dollars depending on the strategies employed by MDOT.”**



The following amendment would significantly reduce our concerns:

**(E) THE DEPARTMENT SHALL FUND ELEMENTS OF THE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT CONCURRENT WITH THE FUNDING FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MAJOR HIGHWAY CAPACITY EXPANSION PROJECTS, PROVIDED THAT THE STATE REMAINS IN COMPLIANCE WITH ALL APPLICABLE FEDERAL REQUIREMENTS AND DOES NOT JEOPARDIZE THE RECEIPT OF FEDERAL FUNDS FOR THE MAJOR HIGHWAY CAPACITY EXPANSION PROJECT.**

**(F) IF FEDERAL FUNDS ARE JEOPARDIZED BY THE TIMELINE OF THE MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION PROJECT, THE STATE SHALL STILL BE REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE CORRESPONDING MULTIMODAL PROJECT; HOWEVER, IMPLEMENTATION MAY BE DELAYED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

**(G) IF A MAJOR HIGHWAY CAPACITY EXPANSION PROJECT IS FULLY FUNDED BY THE STATE AND DEEMED NECESSARY BY THE DEPARTMENT, THE STATE SHALL STILL BE REQUIRED TO IMPLEMENT THE CORRESPONDING MULTIMODAL PROJECT; HOWEVER, IMPLEMENTATION MAY BE DELAYED AT THE DISCRETION OF THE DEPARTMENT.**

This language keeps the bill's intent by still requiring the offsetting project be implemented, but ensures that the state can take advantage of federal funds when available. Since, especially now, we have no idea when funds will be available, we cannot risk losing them if the state budget cannot support the offsetting project on the required timeline of the federal funding. It can create a cascading effect of project/fund losses. **To be clear, the state is still required to build the offset project, we just want to make sure we aren't losing federal funds when they are available if the state doesn't have the funding for the offsetting project.**

We look forward to collaborating with the bill's sponsor and other stakeholders to ensure that the final legislation balances environmental objectives with efficient project delivery and maintains access to necessary funding sources.

Thank you for considering our perspective on this important matter.

For any comments, inquiries, or further information, please do not hesitate to contact me at [mdonovan@acecmd.org](mailto:mdonovan@acecmd.org) or our government affairs consultant, Rory Murray at [Murray@providence.llc](mailto:Murray@providence.llc).

Respectfully,

Maria Donovan  
Executive Director  
ACEC/MD