



Date: January 29, 2025

Bill: SB 395 – Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2025

Position: Support

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee:

The National Aquarium respectfully requests a favorable report for SB 395. This legislation would improve planning and development of transportation projects, including by requiring that the Department of Transportation (DOT) evaluate certain major capital projects for their impact on greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled, and develop and implement multimodal transportation programs as part of major highway expansion projects exceeding \$5 million.

One of the National Aquarium's three strategic conservation goals is to combat climate change. We do this through a holistic, solutions-focused approach, which includes translating ocean and climate science, building resilience through community empowerment, implementing nature-based solutions, and reducing our own carbon footprint with a commitment to achieve net-zero Scopes 1 and 2 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2035. Our organization has also started compiling Scope 3 emissions data and about a third of our staff rely on modes of transport other than individual motor vehicles for commuting to work. The National Aquarium is part of Baltimore's Transit Future campaign coordinated by the Greater Baltimore Committee.

The transportation sector accounts for approximately 35% of the state's GHG emissions with most of these emissions resulting from on-road vehicles powered by gasoline or diesel¹ and in 2022, 20% of Maryland's energy consumption was for motor vehicle gasoline, excluding ethanol². Burning motor fuel causes carbon dioxide and other GHGs to enter our atmosphere and contribute to climate change. Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction plan notes that further emissions reductions from our transportation sector will require increased use of transit and other modes. Promoting pedestrian-centered transportation infrastructure, expanding access to public transit, and creating bike lanes would significantly reduce greenhouse gas emissions related to transportation while saving Maryland commuters time and money. This legislation better aligns transportation in Maryland with the state's climate goals and ensures that transportation remains a critical component of advancing environmental justice. The National Aquarium appreciates the prioritization of overburdened and underserved in determining what qualifies as an offsetting activity.

Now more than ever, the state of Maryland can and should build on its climate leadership. This legislation, like bills enacted in other states such as California, Colorado, Minnesota, will better align future transportation investments with our ambitious and necessary climate goals. Modernizing our transportation infrastructure will not only yield positive environmental outcomes, but will improve public health, shorten commutes, and reduce transportation costs for Marylanders.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on SB 395.

Contact:

Ryan Fredriksson

Vice President, Government Affairs

410-385-8276

rfredriksson@aqua.org

Maggie Ostdahl

Sr. Conservation Policy Manager

410-385-8275

mostdahl@aqua.org

¹ [Maryland's Climate Pollution Reduction Plan – Transportation.](#)

² [U.S. Energy Information Administration \(EIA\). Maryland State Profile and Energy Estimates.](#)