



Maryland Municipal League
The Association of Maryland's Cities and Towns

TESTIMONY

March 5, 2025

Committee: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Bill: SB 881 - Transportation - Regional Transportation Authorities

Position: Favorable with Amendment

Reason for Position:

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) supports Senate Bill 881, with amendment. The bill establishes three regional transportation authorities and additional transportation funding mechanisms. The MML amendment would allow for additional regional authorities to be created.

Transportation infrastructure is critical to moving people and goods in an efficient manner. However, prioritizing projects, cohesive planning, and adequate funding are challenging. Particularly in the current fiscal climate, transportation infrastructure needs are high, but funding is struggling to keep pace. Municipal governments maintain almost 10% of the lane miles in the State, so the responsibility at the local level is significant.

The framework and funding in SB 881 fundamentally alter transportation policy in a unique and potentially beneficial manner. The funding piece is particularly impactful for local governments as it would add on top of existing highway user revenue (HUR). Even with the municipal portion of HUR returning to levels near what was provided for decades preceding the historic HUR cuts in 2009, municipal governments still have a backlog of projects and current transportation funding gaps. The surcharges created in the bill would provide a source of additional funding for local governments to better fulfill local transportation needs.

MML represents 161 local governments from across the State and proposes an amendment to allow for the creation of further regional authorities in addition to those created in the bill.

“A group of three or more counties not already a member of a regional authority created under this section may petition the General Assembly to be created as a regional authority under this section if a majority of the counties and municipalities in those counties sign the petition.”

For these reasons, the Maryland Municipal League respectfully requests a favorable report with the above amendment on Senate Bill 881. For more information, please contact Bill Jorch, Director, Public Policy and Research at billj@mdmunicipal.org. Thank you in advance for your consideration.