



Chair Guy Guzzone
and Members, Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

January 29, 2025

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee:

My name is Dean Howell and I am a Policy Fellow at [Greater Greater Washington](#), a nonprofit that works to advance sustainability and equity in housing, land use, and transportation throughout Greater Washington and beyond. **GGWash strongly supports Senate Bill 395, the Transportation and Climate Alignment Act**, which would allow the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to offset pollution from major highway expansion projects with investments in infrastructure for public transit, walking, and biking.

SB 395 would require MDOT to measure the greenhouse gas emissions of all major transportation projects, and align the state's capital transportation budget with Maryland's climate goals, as required by the Climate Solutions Now Act. For major highway expansion projects over \$100 million, MDOT must offset pollution with cleaner transportation options - like public transit, bike paths, and pedestrian infrastructure - and prioritize investments in overburdened and underserved communities. **These provisions internalize the costs of the transportation sector that are not currently being accounted for.**

Maryland residents are currently bearing most of the costs of car-centric transportation infrastructure, including the cost of air pollution and its negative health effects, particularly those who live near major roadways. Those who cannot or do not drive also pay in lost opportunities, lower health outcomes from worse healthcare access, and in significantly increased transit time when public transit options are limited or unreliable.

I experience this multiple times a week, as my home in Northwest DC is 30 miles away from a family member's home here in Annapolis. This is typically a 40-minute drive with no traffic. Using public transit typically takes between 2-3 hours between transfers. Their community also has no sidewalks, so I have to choose between taking a rideshare for 1 mile or walking along the



shoulder of a main road. I have to budget an additional 2-4 hours of round-trip commute time, and this substantially limits how often I can see them.

By prioritizing projects that expand public transit and active transportation infrastructure, the Transportation and Climate Alignment Act will support equitable access for every Marylander to job opportunities, education, and healthcare. We ask that the Budget and Taxation Committee give this bill a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Dean Howell'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name 'Dean' and last name 'Howell' clearly distinguishable.

Dean Howell
Policy Fellow