



## **CLIMATE COALITION**

### **Montgomery County, MD**

**HB437 - Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026 (TCA)**  
**Committee: House Appropriations Committee**  
**Organization: Climate Coalition of Montgomery County**  
**Submitting: Karl Held**  
**Position: FAVORABLE**  
**Hearing Date: February 10, 2026**

Dear Chair Ben Barnes, Vice Chair Anne Kaiser, and Committee Members,

The Climate Coalition of Montgomery County urges you to vote **favorably** on **HB 437** which would cut pollution from Maryland's highway system by investing in public transit, walking, and biking.

Transportation is Maryland's #1 source of climate pollution and the second largest expense behind housing. Maryland families deserve more affordable, accessible, and sustainable transportation choices. By prioritizing projects that expand public transit and active transportation infrastructure, the **Transportation and Climate Alignment Act** will ensure that every Marylander has equitable access to opportunities like jobs, education, and healthcare.

**TCA** would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to measure the greenhouse gas (GHG) 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.

Further benefits of TCA include the following:

#### **Climate Impacts**

- GHG emissions from transportation can be significantly reduced.
- TCA aligns transportation planning with Climate Solutions Now Act targets and Governor Moore's Executive Order on Climate Change.
- If Maryland achieves a 20% reduction in per-capita vehicle miles traveled compared to business as usual, the projected outcomes include:
  - 78 million metric tons of CO<sub>2</sub>e avoided (2024–2050)
  - 66 terawatt-hours of energy savings
  - 171 fewer traffic fatalities per year

- 1,251 fewer premature deaths per year due to improved air quality and increased physical activity

**Affordability impacts as an Environmental Justice issue:**

- Transportation is the **second largest household expense** for most Marylanders.
  - In some rural areas of the state, such as Frostburg, transportation is actually the largest household expenditure.
- Car ownership costs on average are over \$12,000 per year, per car, pricing many families out of basic mobility.
  - In the DC and Baltimore regions, Marylanders are spending over \$14,000 per year on transportation.
- **Maryland households could save \$3,000+ annually** with expanded transit, walking, and biking options ([Source: Smarter MODES Calculator, RMI](#))
  - Affordable transportation options reduce gas, maintenance, and insurance.

In addition to reducing climate pollution, this bill would protect our health, reduce traffic congestion, and save consumers money - [an average of more than \\$3,200 per household each year on vehicle costs](#). Investing in more efficient, lower-maintenance infrastructure can also reduce the state's long-term costs. New analysis shows Maryland could achieve approximately **\$550 million per year in net savings by 2050** by building out bus rapid transit, protected bike lanes, and passenger rail.

The Climate Coalition of Montgomery County strongly urges a **favorable report** on HB 437 as it will have a huge impact on affordability and health for all Marylanders and on the climate goals set by Montgomery County's Climate Action Report and the state of Maryland.