



Delegate Ben Barnes, Chair
Appropriations Committee
120 Taylor House Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Delegate Marc Korman, Chair
Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 17, 2026

RE: HB 230 – UNFAVORABLE – Transportation – Consolidated Transportation Program – Prioritization (Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026)

Dear Chair Barnes, Chair Korman and Members of the Committees:

The Maryland Asphalt Association (MAA) represents approximately 110+ members, including 20 material producers, contractors, engineering firms, and associate members, supporting a 7,000-person workforce. MAA actively collaborates with regulatory agencies to advocate for the asphalt industry, ensuring fair regulations at both the state and federal levels. Additionally, we support adequate funding for Maryland's multimodal transportation system.

MAA appreciates the Department's willingness to meet and discuss the bill and its overall approach. We support the concept of a transparent, data-driven scoring mechanism to help prioritize transportation investments. Objective evaluation tools can improve public confidence and strengthen long-term planning. However, as drafted, HB 230 is not something we can support.

First, the bill's structure is heavily weighted in a manner that disadvantages roadway capacity and improvement projects. The proposed scoring criteria appear designed in a way that inherently favors certain project types over others, rather than creating a balanced framework that evaluates all modes fairly based on their distinct purposes and performance metrics. We firmly believe there should be two separate evaluation systems: one for roadway projects and one for transit projects. Roadway and transit projects serve fundamentally different functions and should not be forced into a single scoring framework. Attempting to measure both through a single system risks distorting priorities and producing outcomes that do not reflect Maryland's full transportation needs.

Second, the bill lacks sufficient transparency. While it establishes a scoring structure, it does not provide adequate clarity regarding how criteria are weighted, how trade-offs are resolved, or how final decisions are made when projects compete across categories. Without greater transparency and accountability in the methodology, stakeholders and taxpayers cannot meaningfully evaluate whether funding decisions are balanced and justified.

We are also concerned about the exclusion of certain entities, including WMATA and the Maryland Transportation Authority. If the goal is to create a comprehensive, objective framework for prioritizing transportation investments, carving out major components of the State's transportation system undermines that objective and creates inconsistency across agencies.

Finally, while we appreciate the exclusion of system preservation projects from the scoring framework, this provision does little to address our concerns. System preservation is already not prioritized at the level necessary to maintain Maryland's aging infrastructure in a true state of good repair. Excluding preservation from scoring does not guarantee it will receive adequate or protected funding, nor does it correct the existing imbalance in prioritization.



Maryland's transportation system depends on maintaining and modernizing its roadway network, which remains the backbone of economic activity, freight movement, emergency response, and daily commuting. Any project selection framework must reflect that reality in a balanced and transparent manner. For these reasons, the Maryland Asphalt Association respectfully urges an unfavorable report on House Bill 230 unless substantial revisions are made to ensure transparency, fairness across modes, and appropriate treatment of roadway investments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Tim Smith'.

Tim E. Smith. P.E.
President
Maryland Asphalt Association