



HB0230 - SUPPORT
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HB0230, Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026

Meeting of the Appropriations Committee

February 17, 2026

Dear Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and Members of the Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on HB0230.

Elders Climate Action is a nationwide organization devoted to ensuring that our children, grandchildren, and future generations have a world in which they can thrive. The Maryland Chapter has members across the state.

Each day, we see the climate crisis more clearly. We know that Maryland is at risk for sea level rise, flooding from intense rainfall, heat waves, and other extreme weather events.

We are particularly concerned about the effects of the transportation sector. It is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland, and recent changes in Federal policy are making it much more difficult to cut emissions in that sector.

We are also acutely aware of the affordability challenges many Maryland households face. Transportation is the second-largest expense for Maryland households, so it plays a key role in affordability. This is especially true for young people, elders, people with disabilities, and those with low or moderate incomes. For those of us on fixed incomes, including many of our members, this is a growing concern. Well-designed transportation programs can make a major difference.

HB0230 updates and clarifies the transportation project prioritization program codified in Chapter 30. The goal is to ensure that public funds are spent efficiently and effectively on transportation projects that deliver the greatest benefits to the community. The bill makes it easier for local partners to request projects, understand how projects are evaluated, and work with the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to implement shared priorities.

The Chapter 30 project prioritization program has been in place since 2017. Local partners have raised issues with the existing project prioritization process and expressed interest in a process that is fairer (geographically and modally), transparent, predictable, transportation mode neutral, and maximizes the benefit per dollar. HB0230 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to implement reforms to make it clearer and more predictable for stakeholders, including counties, municipalities, Metropolitan Planning Organizations, and other entities, when proposing transportation projects for inclusion in the MDOT capital program. The bill would update the current Chapter 30 prioritization process by revising the criteria and measures by which projects are scored to include the following:

1. safety
2. accessibility and mobility
3. climate change and the environment
4. social equity, economic development
5. sustainable land use and transportation demand management.

We support these changes, particularly the criteria on climate change and the environment, social equity, and sustainable land use and transportation demand management.

MDOT must be a steward of public dollars, the environment, and the state's climate goals. This is particularly true since the legislature recently increased revenues to the Transportation Trust Fund. This bill will improve the transparency and accountability of the use of these increased funds. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable report on the Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026.

Thank you for your time and consideration.