



Committee: Budget and Taxation

**Testimony on: SB 62 Transportation - Consolidated Transportation Program - Prioritization
(Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026)**

Position: Support

Hearing Date: February 25, 2026

The Maryland Chapter of the Sierra Club supports the Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026. The Maryland Open Transportation Investment Decision Act currently requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to evaluate and score major transportation projects under consideration in the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), MDOT's six-year capital budget. This process does not tie the scores to MDOT's funding decisions and does not provide adequate transparency on the scoring method and why certain projects are included or removed from the CTP. Additionally, the current system does not require projects to be evaluated based on their impact on climate change. This is particularly problematic given that the transportation sector is the number one source of climate pollution in the state.

The Transportation and Investment Priorities Act of 2026 would increase the transparency of spending decisions by creating a streamlined process for local governments to make funding requests and by requiring MDOT to respond to each request with information on how the project was evaluated using quantifiable measures. Under this legislation, MDOT would create a new process to evaluate projects for their impacts on safety, accessibility and mobility, climate change, the environment, social equity, economic development, and land use and transportation demand management.

Additionally, this legislation would restructure and reconstitute the current Transportation Commission and expand their responsibilities to include reviewing and making recommendations on the prioritization process, operating and capital budget updates, and MDOT's long term plan known as the Maryland Transportation Plan (MTP).

SB 62 would encourage a more streamlined approach for identifying and prioritizing maintenance ("state of good repair") projects by requiring the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) to implement a risk-based system to identify and prioritize investments to achieve a state of good repair. This is an important step to making progress on the state's maintenance backlog. MTA currently has a State of Good Repair backlog of at least \$2.8 billion, as identified in the 2025 Capital Needs Inventory.

We urge a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 62 due to these important advances offered by the bill.

Lindsey Mendelson
Maryland Sierra Club
lindsey.mendelson@mdsierra.org

Josh Tulkin
Chapter Director
Josh.Tulkin@MDSierra.org