

Testimony on HB 437
Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Date: March 24, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

Dear Chair Guzzone and Members of the Committee,

My name is Nathan Kalasky, and I am an undergraduate urban studies student at Coppin State University in Baltimore. I strongly support the Transportation and Climate Alignment Act, which would reduce climate pollution and vehicle miles traveled generated by our state's highway system by promoting investments in public transit, pedestrian, and cycling infrastructure.

HB 437 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to measure and mitigate increases to greenhouse gas emissions generated by major highway capacity expansion projects with costs of over \$100 million. Potential mitigations include public transit service improvements and expansion, bicycle and pedestrian infrastructure, transit-oriented development and transportation demand management strategies, and other sustainable growth strategies.

Providing transportation alternatives would save Marylanders thousands of dollars per year, according to the Rocky Mountain Institute's Smarter MODES Calculator, a 20% reduction in VMT per capita would save the average Maryland household \$3,271 per year compared to baseline.

In order to meet both the state's ambitious climate goals and vehicle miles traveled per capita reduction goals, a shift in transportation priorities away from highway expansions and towards transit expansion and active transportation is essential. Alternative projects which could receive additional funding following a shift in transportation priorities include the Baltimore Red Line light rail transit project, a fifth bus division and bus service improvements proposed by the Maryland Transit Administration's BMORE BUS plan, FLASH bus rapid transit in Montgomery County, Southern Maryland Rapid Transit in Prince George's and Charles County, expanded MARC service, increased funding for LOTS, and pedestrian and cycling projects across the state.

I strongly urge **a favorable report on HB 437.**

Sincerely,

Nathan Kalasky