



RMI

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Washington, DC 20036

Committee: Budget and Taxation Committee
Testimony on: SB 59, “Major Highway Capacity Expansion Projects and Impact Assessments (Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026)”
Position: Informational
Hearing Date: March 24, 2026

Members of the Committee,

RMI is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization working to secure a clean, prosperous, zero-carbon future for all by leveraging market-driven solutions.

This year, Maryland faces a \$1.4 billion budget deficit. According to RMI analysis, if the state prioritized multimodal projects to meet future urban travel demand, **the Maryland budget could see average net savings of \$550 million per year** from more efficient construction and maintenance spending.

Transportation is the 2nd largest expense for Maryland households. According to a 2024 report from BLS, **Baltimore metro area households spent \$14,538 a year buying and maintaining private vehicles**. Per APTA, households that have the option to commute via transit can save more than \$13,000 per year.

Maryland is also not on track to meet its climate goals. According to the Department of Transportation’s (MDOT) 2023 Carbon Pollution Reduction Plan, the state’s current strategies will not reduce Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) by the 20% per capita required to achieve climate alignment in 2050.

The enclosed results show our analysis of the impacts to Marylanders if MDOT were to achieve its 20% per capita VMT reduction goal with multimodal investments. These potential impacts include:

- **\$3,081 of average household savings per year** from reduced vehicle operating costs and depreciation, adding up to **\$62 billion in direct cost savings** for Marylanders by 2050
- **400 miles of new Bus Rapid Transit Service**, 2,900 miles of new Protected Bike Lanes, and 51 miles of new Passenger Rail
- **26 hours of annual time savings per resident** from congestion relief
- 55 million metric tons of cumulative CO2e savings
- 171 fewer car crash fatalities on average per year
- 1,420 fewer deaths on average per year from cleaner air & increased physical activity

Our peer-reviewed methodology is available online at the RMI 'Smarter MODES Calculator' and 'Building Smarter' webpages for the Committee's convenience.

Signed,

Jasmine Chiu
Manager, RMI