



BRANDON M. SCOTT
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations
88 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

SB 0288

February 3, 2026

TO: Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Brandon M. Scott, Mayor, City of Baltimore

RE: Senate Bill 288 - An ACT Concerning: Transportation – Highway User Revenues Capital Grants – Calculation

POSITION: FAVORABLE

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and members of the Committee: please be advised that I am in strong **support** of Senate Bill (SB) 288 Transportation – Highway User Revenues Capital Grants – Calculation.

Baltimore City is the only jurisdiction in Maryland that is responsible for maintaining State roads. That includes 2,000 miles of roadways, approximately 1,400 traffic signals, 298 bridges and culverts, 456 miles of alleys, 179 miles of bike lanes, and major highways like I-83, which the State does maintain when they pass through other cities and counties. Prior to 2010, Baltimore received roughly \$200 million in HUR funding each year to manage this workload. With inflation, that would be around \$300 million today.

But HUR funding has not kept pace with inflation. In fact, the State reduced Baltimore City's share of HUR beginning in 2010, costing us, in total, roughly \$1 billion. Capital funding fell from up to \$73 million a year to \$0 overnight, which forced the City to make difficult decisions, deferring critical maintenance and scaling back operations for our Department of Transportation to avoid significant layoffs. After nearly 15 years of this lower funding level, the damage is clear: the City's capital needs far outpace capacity each year. Studies estimate¹ that the condition of Baltimore City roads costs drivers roughly \$2,800 per year.

As a result of the Maryland General Assembly's efforts to temporarily restore the City's 12.2% HUR share for Fiscal Years 2026 and 2027, the City has addressed 95 miles of resurfacing, 445 blocks of alleys and footways, nine signal reconstructions, 650 ADA ramp upgrades, two major streetscape projects, and two major bridge projects. But beginning in Fiscal Year 2028, this share is set to decrease once again, which would cut resurfacing capacity down to 30 lane miles per year, a decrease of 68%. ADA ramps and alley and footway projects would decrease by 66%,

¹ "Maryland Transportation by the Numbers." TRIP, March 2025. <https://tripnet.org/reports/maryland-transportation-by-the-numbers-baltimore-news-release-03-19-2025/>

signal reconstruction work would be eliminated entirely, and the City would complete only one major bridge or streetscape project every two years. Due to years of deferred maintenance, the need is greater than ever, and yet we are operating with an HUR budget that is smaller than it was in 2009. This is not sustainable.

In addition to compounding maintenance challenges, any cuts to HUR funding will have economic consequences across the region, including job losses and threats to local engineering firms and contractors. When capital investment drops, smaller local firms and contractors bear the brunt of the impact, while larger firms wait out the storm, or simply shift jobs away from the region or State. Especially given the impact of federal job losses across Maryland, it would be irresponsible to threaten the livelihood of local businesses by slashing HUR dollars that fund their contracts.

The City recognizes that the State transportation budget needs reform, especially as HUR funding has declined overall. But local jurisdictions cannot afford to sacrifice critical transportation projects at the local level; the need is too great. For these reasons, I urge a **favorable** report on SB 288.