

Testimony on HB0437
Transportation and Climate Alignment Act of 2026
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Date: March 24, 2026

Position: SUPPORT

My name is Simeon Parker, a 25 year old resident of Baltimore County that strongly supports **HB0437**, which would cut pollution from Maryland's highway system by investing in public transit, walking, and biking.

Transportation is Maryland's #1 source of climate pollution and the second largest expense behind housing. Maryland families deserve more affordable, accessible, and sustainable transportation choices. By prioritizing projects that expand public transit and active transportation infrastructure, the **Transportation and Climate Alignment Act** will ensure that every Marylander has equitable access to opportunities like jobs, education, and healthcare.

HB0437 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to measure the greenhouse gas emissions of all major transportation projects, and align the state's capital transportation budget with Maryland's climate goals, as required by the Climate Solutions Now Act. For major highway expansion projects over \$100 million, MDOT must offset pollution with cleaner transportation options - like public transit, bike paths, and pedestrian infrastructure - and prioritize investments in overburdened and underserved communities.

My lengthy commute from Baltimore County into Baltimore City reflects the challenge so many Marylanders face every day with our transportation system. I moved back home to Maryland to build a life where my family is from, but I often worry about whether this state will be a dynamic place where my generation can actually afford to stay. Without reliable public transit options, I like many of my peers am dependent on a car just to get to work. That dependency means my ability to hold a job, pay my bills, and plan my future is tied to unpredictable and rising costs: gas prices, insurance, critical repairs, and parking. These aren't luxuries, they're the price of participation in daily life, and they're squeezing young people and working families across this state. Maryland should be a place where the next generation can put down roots, and investing in affordable, sustainable options for transportation is a crucial part of making that possible.

The environmental impact of our transportation infrastructure is most clear when I visit my grandparents in Pikesville. The congestion on our major roads is relentless – noisy, noxious, and exhausting for everyone who lives near them. For older adults and young children especially, that pollution is a health burden they carry every day. The investments **SB59** would require in transit, bike infrastructure, and pedestrian pathways would make our neighborhoods quieter, cleaner, and safer for the people who are most vulnerable to the harms of car-dependent infrastructure.

In addition to reducing climate pollution, **HB0437** would protect our health, reduce traffic congestion, and save consumers money - [an average of more than \\$3,000 per household each year on vehicle costs](#). Investing in more efficient, lower-maintenance infrastructure can also reduce the state's long-term costs. New analysis shows Maryland could achieve approximately **\$550 million per year in net savings by 2050** by building out bus rapid transit, protected bike lanes, and passenger rail.

I strongly urge a **favorable report on HB0437**.