

**Testimony on SB 62
Transportation Investment Priorities Act of 2026
Senate Budget & Taxation Committee**

Date: February 23, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

The Coalition for Smarter Growth supports the **Transportation Investment Priorities Act**. Our organization advocates for walkable, bikeable, inclusive, and transit-oriented communities as the most sustainable and equitable way for the Washington, DC region to grow and provide opportunities for all. We have worked extensively in the Maryland suburbs of DC, in particular in Prince George's and Montgomery counties, and have supported numerous transit, safe streets, and arterial road investments.

SB 62 will ensure Maryland's transportation investments are aligned with state policy goals and that funding decisions are transparent and data driven. We applaud MDOT's effort to modernize the Chapter 30 project scoring program. Adopting SB62 would ensure that these efforts guide future administrations in spending Maryland's transportation dollars wisely and with accountability.

In neighboring Virginia (where we also work), the Smart Scale project funding and prioritization program is regarded as a national success story, because it has resulted in more cost-effective projects and solutions – both big projects and small projects. Equally important, because Smart Scale doesn't spread funds thinly across too many projects with the result that many never get built, the Virginia program has ensured that the **selected projects are fully funded and are built more expeditiously**. These key components of Smart Scale are likewise contained in MDOT's administrative Chapter 30 measures and SB 62 legislation.

The Smart Scale approach retains widespread, urban, rural and bipartisan support in Virginia after a decade. A major review of Smart Scale in 2023 by the state's transportation secretary and governing board, after five funding rounds, yielded only minor tweaks – core elements of the program were maintained.

SB 62 ensures consideration of land use, environmental impacts, and demand management solutions. It improves the connection between the state and localities to jointly ensure that local land use decisions are linked to transportation projects that taxpayers can afford and that make sense. The new process includes **both Access and Mobility** among the criteria, and flexibility to administratively review and refine the performance measures.

SB 62 helps MDOT more clearly account for system preservation needs versus expansion needs. SB 62 requires MDOT to announce the funds that will be made available for surface transportation capacity projects. This provides more explicit and transparent accounting.

We ask for a **favorable report for SB 62** by the committee. Thank you.