



Senator Brian J. Feldman  
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee  
2 West Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

March 3, 2026

**RE: SB 781 – UNFAVORABLE – Environmental Permits – Requirements for Burden Analysis, Issuance and Renewal, and Public Participation (Cumulative Harms for Environmental Restoration for Improving Shared Health – CHERISH Our Communities Act)**

Dear Chair Feldman and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 250 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

Senate Bill 780 would reform the environmental permitting process in Maryland for various permits including mining operations and fuel facilities within at-risk census tracts. The bill requires a report on the existing and potential environmental impacts on the site with the permit application, which is used by the Department of Environment in determining whether to issue or renew a permit.

MTBMA respectfully opposes SB 781. While we support the goals of protecting environmental quality and community health, this bill would create significant new risks for Maryland companies seeking to obtain or renew essential environmental permits. SB 781 requires applicants in designated areas to prepare extensive “burden reports” analyzing cumulative environmental and public health impacts using broad, undefined criteria. This represents a substantial expansion of the current permitting framework, adding cost, technical complexity, and regulatory uncertainty to both new applications and routine renewals. Even long-compliant businesses could face unpredictable outcomes due to subjective standards that lack clear thresholds.

The bill also expands public participation and judicial review in ways that could significantly lengthen permit timelines and increase litigation risk. For facilities related to road and bridge infrastructure, environmental permits are critical to daily operations. Delays or denials threaten jobs, capital investment, and long-term business planning. Because Maryland companies compete regionally, adding permitting requirements beyond existing state and federal standards risks discouraging reinvestment and expansion within the State. For these reasons, MTBMA urges an unfavorable report on SB 781.

Thank you,  
Michael Sakata  
President and CEO  
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association