
March 12, 2026

The Honorable Marc Korman
Chair, Environment and Transportation Committee
250 Taylor House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Letter of Concern – House Bill 1508 – State Highway Administration – Highway Work Permits

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1508 but respectfully offers the following concerns for the Committee's consideration.

HB 1508 would require the State Highway Administration (SHA) to provide immediate notice to members of the General Assembly who represent a legislative district where a highway work permit application has been submitted.

The SHA appreciates the bill sponsor's consideration and acceptance of a few of the proposed amendments that will limit the scope of the permits covered by the bill, allow SHA to direct developers to provide the notices, remove construction start date information that SHA typically does not receive, and make clear that public involvement in access permitting is not required. SHA remains concerned about jurisdictional authority and the anticipated administrative burden that would be incurred to effectively implement the requirements of the bill. The SHA believes that the requirements of HB 1508 are most appropriate to be implemented by the local jurisdiction where the development occurs.

The authority to approve land use, zoning, and development belongs exclusively to the local jurisdiction. SHA's role in development is limited to access management as authorized by State law and regulations. Access management is technical and limited to ensuring that developer-imposed impacts to the State highway system are effectively mitigated. Any development seeking to build along a State highway is required to obtain an access permit from SHA.

Typically, local jurisdictions have public meetings and comment periods for land use, zoning, and developments before the development is approved. SHA receives an access permit request only after the development is already approved by the local jurisdiction and developers have incurred significant engineering expenses towards their site development and access approaches. Therefore, SHA does not offer an additional layer of public engagement on developments, as SHA's role is limited to ensuring that roadway mitigation is appropriate for the development's impacts. The SHA understands that the intent of HB 1508 is to ensure that elected officials are made aware of anticipated developments in the communities they represent, giving the respective elected officials the opportunity to share the development with their constituents. In many cases, development is proposed to the local jurisdiction for land use and zoning considerations months and sometimes years in advance of access permit submission to SHA. The local jurisdiction is best

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positioned to give elected officials and their constituents sufficient opportunity to engage early in the process for land use decisions.

The SHA understands that it is the intent of the bill sponsor that HB 1508 only applies to access permits, and the SHA appreciates that the bill sponsor is planning to amend the bill accordingly. The SHA receives over 1,000 submissions for access permit requests each year. If HB 1508 is amended to narrow the scope of the type of qualifying access permits and for notice to be provided upon issuance, the number of submissions captured would be significantly less. From submission to permit issuance, the process requires a Traffic Impact Study and Plan Review, with timelines that vary based on project type. In many cases, an access permit submission will not proceed for a variety of reasons on the part of the developer or local jurisdiction. HB 1508 would require SHA to provide over 1,000 notices of access permit requests, many of which may not proceed to additional review stages or receive an approved permit.

The SHA is supportive of sustainable and responsible growth and development that support Maryland's economy and communities. For those reasons, MDOT recommends that any advanced notice of proposed development be provided by local jurisdictions that are responsible for land use, zoning, and approving development.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1508.

Respectfully submitted,

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