



**The Maryland Department of the Environment
Secretary Serena McIlwain**

Senate Bill 389

Land Use - Transit-Oriented Development - Alterations (Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act)

Position: Support
Committee: Finance & Education, Energy, and the Environment
Date: February 17, 2026
From: Alex Butler, Deputy Director of Government Relations

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) **SUPPORTS** SB 389.

Bill Summary

Senate Bill 389 will accelerate the revitalization of communities around transit hubs to increase housing supply, grow the economy, and boost transit ridership. SB 389 designates Transit-oriented developments (TODs) served by rail stations with at least hourly service are automatically designated as Enterprise Zones, unlocks more than 300 acres of State-owned land adjacent to existing transit stations for high-density, mixed-use development, eliminates minimum parking requirements for certain TOD projects, and restricts local legislative bodies from using zoning or land-use planning powers to block high-density housing near transit. Senate Bill 389 will take a transformative step toward aligning Maryland's housing and economic development with its ambitious climate and water quality mandates.

Position Rationale

Under the Climate Solutions Now Act of 2022, Maryland must reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 60% by 2031. Transportation is the largest source of climate pollution in our state, and achieving our targets requires a fundamental shift in land-use patterns to reduce vehicle miles traveled. By removing barriers like minimum parking requirements and enabling high-density, mixed-use development within a half-mile of rail transit stations, SB 389 fosters the walkable, transit-centric communities necessary to move Marylanders out of gas-powered vehicles and onto public transit. TOD typically results in lower per-capita energy use compared to sprawling suburban models, supporting MDE's building decarbonization and energy efficiency goals. Senate Bill 389 recognizes that housing policy is environmental policy. By breaking down barriers to transit-oriented development, Maryland can house more residents, grow its economy, and lead the nation in building a resilient, low-carbon future.

Accordingly, MDE asks for a **FAVORABLE** report for SB 389.