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March 31, 2026

The Honorable William C. Smith Jr.  
Chair, Judicial Proceedings Committee  
2 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 1116 – Howard County – Illegal Dumping – Surveillance System Pilot Program (Ho. Co. 6-26)***

Dear Chair Smith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) is pleased to support House Bill 1116 as a tool to assist with illegal dumping and littering on State highways.

HB 1116 establishes a pilot program in Howard County to combat illegal dumping by authorizing the County to install surveillance systems at known illegal dumping sites. A designated County department would mail citations or warnings to vehicle owners caught on camera dumping illegally, similar to the existing anti-dumping program in Baltimore City.

Maryland deserves a clean, safe, and reliable transportation system. Litter is an ongoing issue for the State Highway Administration (SHA). Current funding and resources support four-to-six-week cleanup cycles for litter on and around State roads, weather permitting. Unfortunately, litter rapidly re-accumulates in certain areas, sometimes within days of a cleanup event. Furthermore, illegal dumping is a substantial concern, where dumping sites have resulted in costly and laborious cleanup demands.

This increased activity requires SHA to shift funding and resources to litter cleanup – money which could be better utilized maintaining and improving our network of State highways. In Fiscal Year (FY) 2025, SHA spent \$18.9 million on addressing litter on State highways. This is not a one-time occurrence – in FY 2024, SHA spent \$18 million on these activities. The volume of litter accumulation far outpaces SHA's cleaning cycles and funding available for this work.

The SHA encourages new and innovative approaches to keeping Maryland's roadways litter-free. HB 1116 contributes to our shared highway maintenance and safety goals. Any additional enforcement measures to hold those who litter accountable and stop littering entirely at the source are welcome and supported by SHA. With an additional \$18 million in state funds each year, SHA could advance more critical projects, including safety-focused initiatives, in our communities.

The SHA would like to highlight the recently revamped Adopt-A-Highway Program, which empowers Marylanders to take an active role in keeping our highways clean and beautiful for all users. The goal is to leverage interested parties to support litter pick up in their communities, educate Marylanders about the hazards of litter, and generally improve the aesthetics of our highway system.

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The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberations and issue House Bill 1116 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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