



Transportation for Maryland

Transportation That Works for Everyone

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In November the Transportation for Maryland Coalition held a member meeting to update people interested in transportation issues on the initiatives moving at the federal and state level. The room was full of people representing diverse interests from the owner of a local bus mobility company to avid bicyclists, from engineers to activists. The room reflected the broad support for transportation reform. As one speaker noted, there is a need for diverse coalitions to work together and more and more interest in this issue.

Federal Reauthorization:

A Chance for Reform

The reauthorization of the federal transportation bill is an important opportunity for everyone. This is the second largest domestic spending bill in the United States, but for too long that money has been going to special interests – not meeting the needs of the community. And the current reauthorization is an unparalleled opportunity to achieve meaningful policy reform as well:

Transportation needs to serve everyone.

There must be more access for those who don't have personal transportation options, and transportation spending must level the playing field, not favor highways.

Fix what we have before building new.

Failing bridges and pothole-filled roads must get repaired before we build even more expensive highways. And as we repair our roads we should make sure they provide access for all, including transit users, pedestrians, and bicyclists.

Transportation projects should create jobs and connect people to employment. All our neighborhoods, and especially our most affordable housing, should have transportation access to quality jobs. And transportation projects should create new, local jobs for all residents of the community.

Maryland is a critical state to support meaningful transportation reform at the federal level. The reauthorization could move anytime in 2010. While the current bill takes some significant steps forward, without critical improvements – such as clear performance criteria for all projects – it will not realize its goals. Also, once the bill begins to move there is a risk that meaningful policy reform will be lost to more pork and wasteful spending. We must stand ready to support strong legislation that will help Maryland, and the nation, build a 21st Century transportation network.



State Reform:

Making Maryland a Leader

The current transportation system in Maryland is, in effect, to have no system. The State operates off of a wish-list of projects put forth by local governments or

State sub-agencies, often on the behalf of special interests. There must be criteria to ensure that state dollars are funding smart growth and smart transportation.

Projects must be based on smart criteria and smart planning. Projects proposed for State transportation funding should create a connected, multi-modal system, increase pedestrian and bicycle access, invest in our existing system, minimize environmental impacts, and increase connectivity for commercial activity including freight movement and access to jobs.

Regional impacts should be considered before decisions are made. Too often land use and transportation projects are considered in a bubble, without thinking about the secondary impacts on the region. Those regional impacts must be put forward so they can be addressed.

Our streets should be safe for all users.



Transportation should not just equal cars and trains. Pedestrians and bicyclists must feel safe on our streets whether they are running errands, commuting to work, or just out for the day.

For more information or to join, contact:

1000 Friends of Maryland

Jennifer AT friendsofmd.org

Biophilia Foundation

NWilliams.Biophilia AT verizon.net

BRIDGE

DCHCasey AT aol.com

Chesapeake Bay Foundation

TCummings AT CBF.org

Clean Water Action

AGalli AT CleanWater.org

Central Maryland Transportation Alliance

BOMalley AT CMTAlliance.org

Coalition for Smarter Growth

Cheryl AT SmarterGrowth.net

“Transportation is the leverage that makes a community a better community.”

- Forum attendee, Klaus Philipsen

We don't have enough transportation dollars to continue building projects that do not serve long-term needs and considerations.

We must focus on the outcomes of our transportation decisions and make our planning process accountable to meeting those outcomes. Legislation will be introduced this session to reform Maryland's process and make the State a leader on transportation issues.

Interested? Get Involved!

Right now we have an incredible opportunity to achieve meaningful reform at both the federal and state levels. But we cannot do it without you!

Transportation FOR Maryland is a broad coalition of groups and organizations representing different areas of the state and different issue areas, from equity advocates to faith groups to the business community.

Membership is free, and by joining you will get periodic updates on the latest actions from Congress and Annapolis. Your name on the coalition statement gives us the power to make change possible!

Citizens Planning and Housing Association

DanP AT CPHABaltimore.org

Environment Maryland

BSh AT EnvironmentMaryland.org

Innovative Housing Institute

PMaier AT IHIBalto.org

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

JBrock AT MDLVCV.org

One Less Car

Carol AT OneLessCar.org

Surface Transportation Policy Program

ACanby AT TransAct.org

Transportation Equity Network

Casey AT TransportationEquity.org