



**NEWS RELEASE**

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**TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATION INTRODUCED TO CREATE JOBS,  
SPEND MARYLAND'S DOLLARS MORE WISELY**

**Annapolis** – A diverse coalition of business, equity, faith, smart growth, and environmental groups announced today their priority transportation legislation for the 2010 General Assembly session. HB1155/SB760, introduced by Delegate Lafferty and Senators Pugh and Harrington, would ensure that every dollar invested in transportation results in a system that works better for all Marylanders.

HB 1155 will be heard in the House Ways and Means Committee on March 2<sup>nd</sup>.

“This bill requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to evaluate all state-funded transportation projects against critical state goals,” said Delegate Stephen Lafferty (D-42). “As Maryland struggles to close a growing transportation funding deficit, the state is positioned to truly re-think how we prioritize and fund our transportation projects to ensure goals and objectives are met.”

“The decisions we make today will determine the transportation legacy we leave our children. This legislation will ensure that legacy works for the environment, for all citizens, and for the economy,” said Senator Catherine Pugh (D-40).

“A connected, smart transportation system is essential for a stronger economy. It enables employees to reach their jobs and enables customers to reach our stores,” said Brian O'Malley, Director of Transportation Policy and Research with the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance. “We know that some transportation projects pay off with far more jobs and a far greater impact on local economies. We must make sure that the state is choosing to invest in those projects that do the most for our communities and the most for our economy.”

“This legislation adds predictability and outcome-based analysis to the process for determining projects for state transportation funding,” said Dru Schmidt-Perkins, Executive Director of 1000 Friends of Maryland. “Smart planning is dependent on clear goals – goals that we are finally connecting to our transportation planning process.”

"I have members of my congregation who need better transportation options for getting to jobs," said Reverend Alan Traher, Co-Chair of the Baltimore Regional Initiative Developing Genuine Equality and pastor of Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer. "Focusing our transportation dollars to make this happen is the right thing to do."

Specifically, the legislation would:

- Focus transportation requests on the problem that needs solving, ensuring that the solution – be it a road, pedestrian access, or transit – truly meets the need of residents.
- Require MDOT to evaluate each transportation project that the state funds against how it moves Maryland towards clear goals.
- Require that the goals that direct funding decisions be the same goals Maryland has already adopted in policies and plans, such as the Maryland Transportation Plan which lists five goals: quality of service, safety and security, system preservation, environmental stewardship, and connectivity for daily life, and other state policies, including those that address land use and climate change.
- Report MDOT's rationale for choosing projects in the annual Consolidated Transportation Program, the state's capital program for transportation spending.

"Now more than ever, in this time of tight budgets we need to be careful that we are spending money wisely," said Brad Heavner, State Director of Environment Maryland. "This bill would help the state determine which transportation projects would do the best job of promoting smart growth."

The coalition is also supporting a suite of bills that would make transportation safer for bicyclists and pedestrians:

- Ensure a safer passing distance for cars (SB51, Raskin; HB461, Cardin)
- Eliminate laws that require the use of shoulders even when the shoulder is unsafe (SB624, Frosh; HB1193, Carr)
- Hold vehicle drivers accountable for accidents they cause (HB388, Simmons)
- Provide more funding for bicycle and pedestrian access (HB282, Peña-Melnyk)

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*Transportation for Maryland is a diverse coalition of over 25 organizations working together across the state to reform transportation planning and the transportation system in Maryland. To do this we work both on the national level and on the state level to make sure our processes are designed to achieve the vision of equitable, environmentally responsible, and economically sound transportation choices.*