



**SUBURBAN MARYLAND
TRANSPORTATION ALLIANCE**

HB1424 Oppose

As Vice Chair of Suburban Maryland Transportation Alliance (SMTA), I would like to submit my testimony in opposition to HB 1424. This bill seeks to establish a Public -Private Oversight Review Board as an unnecessary layer of bureaucratic oversight certain to translate into delay. A corollary requirement that EIS studies be completed before pre-solicitation adds 2 years to the process. In all matter of thinking, this is a poorly constructed effort to delay a project and block congestion relief for scores of Maryland residents who desperately await traffic relief in the form of the P3. Creation of a potentially political P3 Oversight Board such as the one proposed herein could negatively impact potential investors considering the project. This is not the approach that the majority of voters support. They want traffic congestion improvements now in order to vastly improve their quality of life which is sorely hampered by hours sitting in traffic.

Establishing a P3 review Board could result in the establishment of a highly politicized group with oversight ability to stack the deck with anti-road legislators with NIMBY leanings, unable to evaluate the proposal with objectivity or with the common good of the state and the region in mind. The creation of the Board itself sends out a negative element of uncertainty to potential investors as they see the potential for risk to escalate. The opposition continues to hound the P3 process, seeking numerous ways to dismantle it, without any viable alternative to fund the much-needed transportation infrastructure.

There is an acute need to move forward towards the P3, with the goal to improve traffic flow by investing in roads and transit. We all must work together in this regard, with that type of parallel effort and without the nasty wave of politics that has characterized the series of bills in this legislative session aimed at killing the P3. The advent of the Beltway Accord, a momentous achievement for both Maryland Virginia cannot be minimized. It is audacious to step in the way of such an accomplishment.

It is clear that the P-3 is the only way to responsibly fund large infrastructure projects such as the 270 widening and the American Legion Bridge improvement. This is a funding process that is proving successful across the country. We must join the ranks of forward moving and thinking jurisdictions that have recognized this tool as invaluable. Vote to oppose this bill which refuses to recognize the value of the P3 and ignores the voters.

Jennifer Russel