



January 29, 2020

**Senate Bill 229**

**Toll Roads, Highways, and Bridges – County Government Consent Requirement –  
Expansion**

**Committee: Finance**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on Senate Bill 229. This important legislation expands the list of counties to include Anne Arundel County that would have a say in the constructing of a State toll road, toll highway, or toll bridge that affects our County. Under current law 9 eastern shore counties have a voice in these decisions, Anne Arundel has as much interest as those counties and should have a seat at the table.

For example, the state has narrowed down construction options for a new bridge over the Chesapeake Bay, and all three proposed locations are in Anne Arundel County. The construction of a new bridge in these areas would have a major impact on the communities surrounding the area, increase traffic in these neighborhoods, and destroy natural areas. Therefore the County should be on equal footing with the eastern shore and have a voice for comments or concerns on the project along with the other affected counties.

A new State toll road, toll highway, or toll bridge has tremendous potential to undermine local control of growth and negate public input by creating development pressures outside of areas planned for growth. It could also negatively impact local environmental, cultural, and historic resources and diminish the quality of life enjoyed by residents – all of which local comprehensive plans typically prioritize protecting. Local officials are best poised to determine if a State toll road, toll highway, or toll bridge is consistent with their community's vision for its future and will avoid negative impacts.

**For those reasons, we urge a FAVORABLE report on SB 229.**

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stuart Pittman", written in a cursive style.

Steuart Pittman  
County Executive