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March 31, 2021

The Honorable Kumar P. Barve  
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee  
Room 251, House Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

**Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 414 – Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021**

Dear Chair Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 414 but offer the following information for the Committee’s consideration due to its far-reaching impacts on numerous aspects of Maryland’s transportation network.

Senate Bill 414 requires the State to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 60% from 2006 levels by 2030 and requires the State to achieve net-zero statewide GHG emissions by 2045. Among numerous other provisions, the bill requires the State to begin transitioning its passenger car fleet to zero emission vehicles (ZEV). The State would also be required to develop a schedule and process for converting the State’s transit bus fleet to ZEV and could not purchase non-ZEV Transit Buses beginning in FY 2023.

It is important to note that the Maryland Commission on Climate Change (MCCC) has spent significant time and resources over the past two years (2019-2020), working closely with the Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE), other State agencies, and numerous stakeholders, on analyzing and understanding climate change mitigation in Maryland. The MCCC has determined that an appropriate and aggressive target for 2030 emission reductions would be a 50% reduction from 2006 levels. This exceeds the current goal of 40% reduction required under the existing Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act (GGRA) and is based on the most recent data and analyses, including economic impacts, available in Maryland and region wide.

It is also critical to remain flexible when considering future transportation funding options. While we appreciate the focus on the Maryland Transportation Trust Fund (TTF), we would not suggest limiting the funding to only the TTF as that may limit opportunities for Maryland to take advantage of potential future funding sources. These sources could include private grants, federal incentives, and other opportunities which could be instrumental in helping Maryland succeed in our ambitious GHG reduction and clean transportation goals.

Planning is underway within MDOT to address electrification of MDOT’s fleet, including its passenger cars, other light duty vehicles (LDVs), and its medium and heavy-duty vehicles supporting operations in all MDOT Transportation Business Units (TBUs). MDOT is also in close coordination with the Department of General Services (DGS) on DGS’s Electrification

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Infrastructure Strategy. A comprehensive strategy for installing charging infrastructure is required to support electrification of the State's fleet of vehicles. Today, most deployments of ZEV transit buses across the United States are via pilot projects, and the transition to a fully zero-emission fleet is highly dependent on continued advancement of technology. Transitioning the MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) bus fleet could require service changes to match the capabilities of alternative fuel transit buses emerging in the market and will require additional planning. In addition, zero-emission bus conversion will require a heavy investment in charging and maintenance infrastructure and in workforce training.

Further, Section 7 of the bill establishes a Commission for the Innovation and Advancement of Carbon Markets and Sustainable Tree Plantings. MDOT is not currently listed as a member of this commission, but the Commission is tasked with developing "recommendations on reviewing State policies to reduce and fully mitigate the clearing of trees during the construction of State highways and other transportation projects;" preparing an analysis of logistical and policy barriers, which would likely include transportation safety setback requirements; a developing a plan for reviewing transportation procurement to ensure the strategy for ensuring a certain amount of plantings occur in underserved areas. MDOT should have representation on this Commission to contribute to these identified tasks.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee carefully consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 414.

Respectfully submitted,

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