
February 11, 2021

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

Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 583 – Climate Solutions Now Act of 2021

Dear Chairman Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following letter of information for the Committee's consideration on House Bill 583 due to its far-reaching impacts on numerous aspects of Maryland's transportation network.

House Bill 583 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 light duty vehicle (LDV) 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.

Planning is underway within MDOT to address electrification of MDOT's fleet, including its 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 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 bus fleet would require significant service changes to match the capabilities of current ZEV transit buses in production. In addition, zero-emission bus conversion will require a heavy investment in charging and maintenance infrastructure and in workforce training. Furthermore, the legislation does not exclude Mobility vehicles from the zero-emission requirements; zero-emission buses are not yet readily available from manufacturers for these vehicle types.

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. Along the same lines, prohibitions on particular GHG emission reduction measures, such as widening, can have unintended consequences throughout the transportation system. These kinds of limitations may result in the development of significant barriers and impacts to our most vulnerable populations and communities and impede Maryland's ability to reach our targets.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee carefully consider this information when deliberating House Bill 583.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Murphy
Director of Planning and Capital Programming
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1275

Melissa Einhorn
State Legislative Officer
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1102