



February 7, 2019

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Chair, Environment & Transportation Committee
Maryland House of Delegates
251 House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 102 - *Toll Roads, Highways, and Bridges - County Government Consent Requirement– Expansion*

Chairman Barve,

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) hopes to raise technical concerns with HB 102 as drafted. **MACo has not taken a position** on the bill related to its essential aims, but hopes to raise these technical concerns with the Committee and its staff.

HB 102 nominally seeks to expand a limited approval authority for new or expanded State toll facilities – to extend language currently limited to nine enumerated Eastern Shore counties. The tenuous interpretation of this current law, including the meaning of “affected counties,” has been a matter of substantial community concern as a potential Chesapeake Bay Bridge project gathers public attention.

Because HB 102 is written into the same section of law as the current provisions for only the shore counties, those jurisdictions are concerned that its passage could compromise the current understanding of that law, and what input it affords to any jurisdiction directly affected by a future Bay crossing project.

As you consider this proposal, we hope that you will consider these potential unintended effects on a matter of great importance to the shore counties. MACo would suggest that were any proposal to advance from the Committee, its best path would be to leave the current Transportation Section 4-407 completely intact, and enshrine any new policy regarding projects other than a Bay crossing in a new, stand-alone section of law (perhaps a new Section 4-408) with provisions designed to effect that goal with no potential for interference with the current law.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact me at 410.269.0043 if more information regarding the local effects of this proposed legislation would be helpful to you and the Committee.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Michael Sanderson'.

Michael Sanderson
Executive Director, MACo

CC: The Honorable Brooke Lierman, Maryland House of Delegates
The Honorable Members, Environment and Transportation Committee, Maryland House of Delegates
Staff, Environment and Transportation Committee, Maryland House of Delegates