



Larry Hogan
Governor
Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor
Gregory Slater
Secretary

Office of the Secretary

July 24, 2020

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Van Hollen
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Majority Leader
H-107, U.S. Capitol
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
United States House of Representatives
2206 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable John Sarbanes
United States House of Representatives
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Andy Harris, M.D.
United States House of Representatives
2334 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Anthony Brown
United States House of Representatives
1323 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin
United States House of Representatives
412 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable David Trone
United States House of Representatives
1213 Longworth House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation:

We are grateful for your continued leadership to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic. As Congress works to find agreement on additional legislation in response to the pandemic, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) strongly urges you to support a request made by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) for an immediate infusion of at least \$37 billion to state departments of transportation (DOTs). This funding will ensure the delivery of planned transportation projects whose benefits will extend far beyond this pandemic and forestall further job losses in the public and private sectors.

With millions of Americans following “stay-at-home” orders, many state DOTs are facing severe losses in revenues, including dedicated user fee revenues on which state transportation programs heavily rely. Projections continue to show decreases in state motor fuel tax and toll receipts as nationwide vehicle traffic reduction bottomed out at about 50 percent during the height of the pandemic. As a result, the ability of state DOTs to carry out their core functions, including capital construction programs, is threatened. Since the beginning of the pandemic, many state DOTs have imposed furloughs and delayed or canceled \$8.6 billion in critical transportation projects, putting at risk transportation construction jobs and the timely realization of benefits those projects bring to communities and commerce.

Maryland’s unique consolidated transportation program, while allowing flexibility in some instances, will suffer statewide from reductions across all modes if not buttressed with additional support. We are working diligently to ensure that our existing projects and ongoing construction remain uninterrupted; however, as we begin to determine the long-term impacts of the pandemic, the budget outlook is increasingly disconcerting. Across our transit, highway, airport, and revenue facilities, we expect to sustain losses for the next several years. Indeed, while initial national forecasting saw devastating short-term impacts with a relatively speedy recovery, the recovery is now expected to be longer than originally anticipated. As updated data has become available over the last three months, AASHTO now estimates state transportation revenue losses of \$37 billion over five years (through FY 2024), with an estimated loss of \$16 billion in FY 2020.

The need for federal funding to carry out planned and critical transportation infrastructure projects remains urgent. Federal relief will prevent further disruptions to planned transportation projects and allow MDOT employees and construction workers – essential front-line employees – to remain on the job planning and delivering these projects. The funding will also preserve the core capabilities of state DOTs across the country to implement a robust, bipartisan surface transportation reauthorization, which can serve as a platform for national economic recovery and growth.

Again, thank you for your important efforts to ensure the transportation sector continues to operate during the current health crisis. I value your support for Maryland’s transportation needs and look forward to our continued worked together to find effective solutions to the challenges created by COVID-19. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions or would like to discuss this request further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Slater', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Gregory Slater
Secretary