



*THE VOICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS*

## **HB 383 – TRANSPORTATION TRUST FUND PROTECTION ACT**

**HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE**

**FEBRUARY 16, 2010**

### **SUPPORT**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce ("MCCC"), as the voice of Montgomery County business, **supports HB 383 which would protect money from being transferred from the Transportation Trust Fund to the General Fund.**

In these times of economic recession, protecting money for our capital infrastructure is more important than ever before. Unfortunately, the sustainability of the Transportation Trust Fund remains an ongoing challenge. Gas tax, titling tax and registration fee revenues are all plummeting, at the time when we need to invest in transportation the most. While the General Assembly made a wise move by diversifying the sources of revenue in the Transportation Trust Fund during the 2007 special session, the sales tax revenues are at risk during these difficult budget times given that they are not viewed as traditional sources of transportation revenues.

The Maryland Department of Transportation has been forced to make over \$2 billion in cuts in 2008-2009 in response to this national economic downturn. We now have not only cut back on new capacity projects, but many system preservation projects have been put on hold as a result of the downturn. While the federal stimulus has allowed some of our system preservation needs to be restored, it in no way solves the structural problem with the sustainability of the Trust Fund and we still remain decades behind in our capacity building needs. In addition, Maryland is moving three transit projects – The Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway, and Red Line, all through the Federal New Starts process, and we must be able to demonstrate in just a few short years, that we have the dollars available to pay for our State portion of these projects.

While we believe that HB 383 is a necessary step in protecting future transportation revenues, we also know that a significant infusion of revenues must occur in order for the Transportation Trust Fund to remain a viable method of funding Maryland's transportation infrastructure. We urge the General Assembly to take a leadership role in finding new revenues for the Transportation Trust Fund and we urge a favorable report on HB 383.

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