



*THE VOICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS*

**SB 229 – BLUE RIBBON COMMISSION – TRANSPORTATION FUNDING  
BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE  
FEBRUARY 10, 2010**

**SUPPORT**

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce ("MCCC"), as the voice of Montgomery County business, **supports Senate Bill 229** which would create a blue ribbon commission on Transportation funding. Since the last revenue increase for transportation in 2007, transportation dollars in Maryland have rapidly declined as a result of both the economic recession and the ongoing problems with reliance on two major revenue sources, the gas tax and titling tax.

Over the past year, Federal government stimulus has kept some transportation projects moving forward. However, many of our major intersection improvements have been deferred for years. With a state transportation network that is already clogged, we cannot expect to be able to fund these critical projects without new revenues.

It is also important to acknowledge that the State of Maryland is forwarding three major transit projects through the new starts process at the federal level. The Purple Line, Corridor Cities Transitway, and Red Line, will all require state funds in order to receive federal approval. Each project may require as much as fifty percent of the total cost of the project to be paid by the State. If we want to demonstrate Maryland's commitment to transit, our State transportation trust fund must have stable and sustainable sources of funding. Unfortunately, our current policies of funding our trust fund largely through the gas tax, while encouraging transit usage and promoting more fuel efficient cars is not a sustainable model of funding the trust fund.

The Blue Ribbon commission will also help explore structural issues with Maryland's Transportation Trust Fund, and whether the current structure provides the best framework for funding our much needed road and transit infrastructure. The entire landscape around funding transportation has changed in the last few years and the blue ribbon commission is an important vehicle for discussing the future

Therefore, we request a favorable report on SB 229.

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