

September 24, 2025

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

Dear Governor Moore,

The appointment of Maryland's next Transportation Secretary will be one of the most consequential decisions of your administration. Transportation is the third-largest category of state spending, and unlike education or healthcare, it is an area where the Governor has broad discretion. Its impacts reach far beyond mobility—shaping air and water quality, roadway safety, economic competitiveness, healthcare access, and the overall quality of life for Marylanders. The leader you choose will determine whether our transportation system advances your priorities for growth, equity, and sustainability.

Many of the undersigned supported your selection of Paul Wiedefeld in 2023 because of his successful background running several agencies that are part of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) or that work closely with it, and his history of working with outside stakeholders. Many of us also participated in the MOVE Maryland Coalition and worked hard to support your agenda for funding badly needed transportation projects.

Under your administration's leadership, and through the great work of the Secretary, Deputy Secretary, and Assistant Secretaries, Maryland has shifted toward a safer, better maintained transportation system, one that serves everyone, providing affordable transportation choices and with fewer vehicular emissions. We applauded the restored CTP funding to address system preservation, safety, sustainability, transit, rail, biking, walking, complete streets, and trails. We also applaud important initiatives including MDOT's transit-oriented development work around MARC and Baltimore transit stations, SHA's increased attention to safety and multimodal accessibility, including the Pedestrian Safety Action Plan, and the Secretary's office initiatives to enhance the project prioritization system.

As you consider whether to nominate Acting Secretary Biddle or a candidate from the national search, we ask you to consider the qualities we want to see in the next head of MDOT. We ask you to nominate a candidate who is:

1. **Committed to carrying out your Executive Order on the climate crisis and achieving the goals of the Climate Solutions Now Act.** Under your administration,

transportation should cease holding Maryland back from meeting its greenhouse gas emissions commitments.

2. **Committed to a fix-it-first approach.** As former MDOT Secretary Greg Slater said, “system preservation is either pay now or pay more later.” Unfortunately, too many MDOT Secretaries, Slater included, have funded new capacity while growing the backlog of state-of-good-repair needs. It is too costly. New leadership must prioritize fix-it-first.
3. **Clear about induced demand.** The growth in driving, due to highway and arterial road expansion, is well documented. Road expansion fails to address the root causes of congestion and wastes billions of dollars. Prioritizing housing and jobs in walkable, mixed-use, transit-oriented locations, and providing the transit and local complete streets investments to support this, is the most effective way to reduce hours of delay in traffic.
4. **Clear about the link between land use and transportation.** Your Sustainable Growth agenda links housing, land use, economic development, and transportation. Transportation investments should be prioritized to address 'fix-it-first' issues, transit, safe street designs, and local street interconnectivity. Prioritizing accessibility and proximity instead of inducing more long-distance commuting will improve outcomes while saving transportation dollars.
5. **Committed to listening and transparency.** The leader for the department will represent your administration by listening to stakeholders, deeply engaging with communities most impacted by transportation pollution and the lack of transportation infrastructure, and providing transparency about MDOT’s decisions.
6. **Experienced with multimodal transportation solutions.** The best candidate will understand the roles of access and proximity – as well as mobility. They will demonstrate support for the latest reforms in transportation planning and analysis, including objective planning studies that fairly include integrated transit and land use alternatives, use modern accessibility-based traffic models, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and other pollutants, and improve access to jobs and safety for all users.
7. **Experienced in Maryland and Mid-Atlantic work.** The best cabinet secretaries draw on a deep connection to the state and its people.
8. **Aligned with your priorities.** The next leader of MDOT should be someone who has not taken a position against policies that MDOT has supported under the Moore Administration- including the Transportation and Climate Alignment (TCA) Act.

Maryland should not measure the success or failure of its transportation program in terms of tons of asphalt spread or billions spent on large new infrastructure projects.

As you name an MDOT Secretary, we also encourage you to direct the agency to continue to build on several important initiatives that are currently underway:

1. **Improve Conditions for Transportation Workers.** Improve safety. Eliminate fatalities. Prevent assaults. Provide competitive pay and benefits.
2. **Project prioritization reform.** Done well in other states, prioritization yields better projects and better outcomes per tax dollar spent. It has not been done well in Maryland, but we are optimistic about reforms initiated during your first term.
3. **Advance Transit Improvement Projects.** Maryland's planning principles call for a transportation system that expands access, strengthens communities, and reduces climate impacts. That means completing the Purple Line, fulfilling the pledge to build the Red Line, and fully implementing the Bmore Bus Plan and MARC Transformation Plan. Together, these projects form the backbone of a modern, equitable transit system. These are not optional add-ons; they are the backbone of a healthier, fairer, and more connected Maryland.
4. **Transit-oriented Development (TOD).** Investing to bring about more TOD and removing regulatory barriers that prevent it are key to unlocking the state's potential to grow and thrive. It is efficient in terms of both the use of land and the use of existing infrastructure. It results in affordable, walkable options for Maryland households.
5. **Transportation & Climate Alignment Act.** MDOT does not currently know if its \$21.5 billion capital program will increase or reduce greenhouse gas emissions. That is not meeting the moment. The TCA directs MDOT to model the emissions impacts of its spending program and make adjustments to meet goals and targets. Support its enactment.
6. **Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions.** MDOT should put you in a position to tell Marylanders if your transportation budget will reduce or increase greenhouse gas emissions.
7. **Vulnerable Road User Safety.** While safety for people inside cars, trucks, and SUV's has improved, we are experiencing a crisis for people outside them when they are struck. Road design can improve outcomes, and MDOT's Pedestrian Safety Action Plans are a critical step in the right direction.

8. **Supporting the State's Planning Principles for Sustainable Growth.** Maryland's transportation challenges, high housing costs, and economic doldrums are interconnected. State transportation investments should be focused on fix-it-first, transit, safe street designs, and local street interconnectivity for existing communities to support your Sustainable Growth agenda and the state's adopted planning principles.

Finally, we ask you to choose a leader who will be forward-looking and anticipate challenges as they set policies and deploy MDOT's resources. The lack of reliable transit, safe roadways, and resilient systems is not simply an inconvenience—it is fueling health disparities, undermining economic competitiveness, and leaving entire communities disconnected. The next Secretary must confront this directly by advancing priorities that improve health, equity, and opportunity:

1. **Expand Transportation Choices:** Accelerate investment in rail, bus rapid transit, and last-mile connections—closing long-standing transit gaps that isolate communities from jobs, healthcare, and education. Expand active transportation options to increase trips by biking
2. **Integrate Land Use & Mobility:** Reverse the cycle of sprawl that forces longer commutes and worsens chronic disease by aligning new housing and commercial development with transit-oriented, walkable design, and prioritizing existing population and activity centers.
3. **Clean Fleet Transition:** Prioritize zero-emission buses, delivery trucks, and government fleets to reduce pollution that contributes to asthma, heart disease, and premature deaths in vulnerable communities.
4. **Stormwater Resilience:** Retrofit roadways with green infrastructure to curb runoff and protect the Chesapeake Bay, which continues to absorb the costs of outdated infrastructure.
5. **Equity & Health Lens:** Require environmental justice and health equity assessments before projects advance—ensuring investments do not perpetuate the unequal burdens created by decades of underinvestment.

Marylanders deserve a transportation leader who will confront our challenges head-on and build a system that works for people, not just for cars and contractors. The Secretary must commit to equity, sustainability, and accountability—ensuring that every dollar spent delivers cleaner air, safer roads, stronger communities, and real mobility for those too often left behind. This is not about preserving the status quo; it is about transforming it. We

urge you to appoint a Transportation Secretary who shares this vision and has the courage to act on it.

Sincerely,

Audubon Mid-Atlantic

BaltPOP - Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places

Bike Maryland

Bikemore

Brandywine TB Southern Region Neighborhood Coalition

BWI Business Partnership

Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Environmental Justice Ministry

Central Maryland Transportation Alliance

Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility

Clayton Baker Trust

Climate Communications Coalition

Coalition for Smarter Growth

Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Congregation

Environmental Justice Ministry cedar lane congregation

Fix Maryland Rail

Frederick County progressives

Fund for Educational Excellence

Greater Greater Washington

Indivisible HoCoMD Environmental Action

League of Women Voters of Maryland

Maryland League of Conservation Voters

Maryland Legislative Coalition

Maryland Sierra Club

Policy Foundation, INC

Rails to Trails Conservancy

Transform Maryland Transportation Coalition

Washington Area Bicyclist Association

Franklin Blatt

Richard Deutschmann

Anna Ellis

Ann Gordon

Jacqueline MacMillan

Jeanne McCann

Caroline Milam

Monica O'Connor

Klaus Philipsen

Nanci Wilkinson