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February 7, 2007

BY HAND DELIVERY

Senator Ulysses Currie
Chairman, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 73/House Bill 57 – Maryland Transportation Authority – Intercounty Connector – Funding.

Dear Chairman Currie:

The Legislative Committee of the Maryland Chamber voted on Monday, February 5, 2007, to take no position on Senate Bill 73 – Maryland Transportation Authority – ICC – Funding. While we do not typically weigh in on legislation for which we have no position, Senate Bill 73/House Bill 57 is unique. The Maryland Chamber's Legislative and Transportation Committees felt strongly that I express their concerns to you. I send this letter to you to reiterate the Maryland Chamber of Commerce's strong support for the construction of the Intercounty Connector (ICC).

Later today, your Committee will hold a hearing on Senate Bill 73/House Bill 57, which would amend the ICC financing plan by removing FY 2008 from the repayment schedule but would continue to assure that the total amount will be repaid for the ICC project by the 2010 deadline. We understand that deferring the FY 2008 payment of \$53 million will *not* delay the construction or harm the financing of the ICC project.

In attending last week's Senate Budget and Taxation Committee briefing by the Maryland Department of Transportation, Acting Secretary Porcari expressed to your Committee that Governor O'Malley is committed to the ICC project. The business community is also pleased to hear of the Governor's commitment in his letter to you, dated February 5, 2007, in which he states, "let there be no doubt that the construction of the ICC must be a part of our overall transportation solution. The funding is in place and the regulatory agencies have approved our plans. And I am committed to building the ICC. It is time to move forward." And we thank him for moving forward and keeping his commitment to this extremely important project.

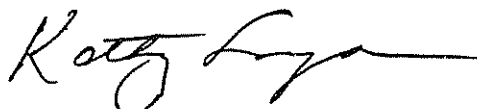
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We understand the reason to temporarily shift this dedicated money to balance the FY 2008 General Fund Budget. And we will not oppose this temporary deferral of funds as long as no additional deferrals occur from the ICC project. We would object to anything that creates any instability in the financing for the ICC at the State and Federal levels or delay the project in any way. In the event that any significant revenue increases are enacted for the General Fund this Session, we request that the \$53 million, being deferred under Senate Bill 73/House Bill 57, be paid on the present schedule in FY 2008.

A safe, efficient, and well-maintained transportation system in this region is extremely important to Maryland's citizens and its economy. Not only do Maryland businesses depend on a well-developed transportation infrastructure, but so do their employees.

Thank you for your time and attention to this critically important transportation project

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Snyder", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kathleen T. Snyder, CCE, President/CEO