



Montgomery County Council

From the Office of Councilmember Phil Andrews

For Immediate Release

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Citing State's finding that the ICC would worsen Beltway traffic, elected officials from Montgomery County urge Assembly not to fund the ICC

Silver Spring, MD -- Citing findings by the Maryland State Highway Administration (SHA) that the proposed Intercounty Connector (ICC) would worsen traffic on the Capital Beltway, state, county, and municipal officials from Montgomery County today called on the General Assembly to reject funding for the controversial multi-billion dollar highway.

Standing where Colesville Road (Rt. 29) intersects with the Beltway, the elected officials blasted the ICC as a waste of money that would set back efforts to relieve traffic congestion.

The Maryland SHA study (on pages IV-316-317 of the official Draft Environmental Impact Statement) found that building the ICC would add 3,000 to 7,000 more vehicles on weekdays where the Beltway intersects Colesville Road and Georgia Avenue compared to not building the ICC. The study also found that building the ICC would add 1,000 vehicles weekdays at the Beltway's intersection with Interstate 270, compared to not building the ICC.

"The ICC would harm my constituents by worsening congestion on the Beltway," said State Senator Sharon Grosfeld (D-Kensington). "How could any Montgomery County representative support that?"

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Delegate Adrienne Mandel (D-Silver Spring) said, "The public needs to know that building the ICC would make Beltway traffic worse. The ICC is no solution to gridlock."

Montgomery County Councilmember Phil Andrews (D-Gaithersburg) added, "It would be outrageous for the General Assembly to fund the ICC now that the official state study -- a study conducted by an administration that strongly supports the ICC -- has concluded that the ICC would make gridlock worse on the Beltway."

Takoma Park officials agreed. "The Beltway is the most congested road in Montgomery County," said Mayor Kathy Porter. "How could state lawmakers possibly justify spending \$2-3 billion on a highway that would make it even worse?"

City Councilmember Marc Elrich added, "The ICC is a fraud. The public was promised that it would end gridlock. Now, the state has admitted it will make Beltway traffic even worse."

The Ehrlich Administration has said it will request that the General Assembly authorize \$1 billion in Grant Anticipation Revenue (GARVEE) bonds to pay for part of the ICC, and wants the General Assembly to reserve for the ICC 20% of all expected federal transportation funds for the next 15 years. The General Assembly previously capped the amount of GARVEE bonds at \$600 million. Including financing, the ICC is estimated to cost approximately \$3 billion.

The Administration's requests will likely trigger a major battle in the General Assembly. Many lawmakers are concerned that the ICC would consume scarce transportation funding for needed road and transit projects.

The Maryland Department of Transportation released the Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the proposed ICC in late November. Public hearings on the DEIS are scheduled for January 4 at 6 p.m. at Roosevelt High School in Greenbelt, January 5 at 6 p.m. at

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Gaithersburg High School, and January 8 and 22 beginning at 10 a.m. at Blake High School in Silver Spring. People who wish to testify are encouraged to sign up in advance by calling 1-866-462-0020. A limited of "walk-in" slots will be available the day of the public hearing. The state will accept written public comment until February 15. The public can comment on-line at www.iccstudy.org/deis-form.php

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