



To Lead, Advocate and Connect as the Voice of Business

HOUSE BILL 543: State Highway Administration - Watkins Mill Road Interchange Project

ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

FEBRUARY 23, 2017

SUPPORT

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce ("MCCC"), as the voice of Montgomery County business, **supports House Bill 543** which requires the State Highway Administration to promptly undertake all steps necessary to complete the Watkins Mill Road Interchange Project per specified requirements and with reporting guidelines.

A robust, well-connected and integrated transportation network is critical to any future economic growth and prosperity in our region. MCCC has long advocated for a number of projects that work together to maximize the potential of the area along the I-270 corridor. The Watkins Mill Interchange is a vital juncture to relieve congestion in the immediate area but also to work in concert with I-270 improvements, the Corridor Cities Transit Way project, better utilization of the MARC station, and improved mobility in the rapidly growing Upcounty area.

The project needs to be built as originally conceived with four on/off ramps. The unintended consequences of further delaying or scaling this project back are devastating to business and economic development efforts that are dependent on I-270 and improved mobility in the Upcounty of Montgomery County, as well as Frederick and Howard Counties.

For these reasons, we request a **favorable report** on House Bill 543.

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce (MCCC) accelerates the success of our members by advocating for increased business opportunities, strategic investment in infrastructure and balanced tax reform to advance Metro Maryland as a regional, national and global location for business success. Established in 1959, MCCC is an independent non-profit membership organization and is proud to be a Montgomery County Green Certified Business.