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Signed May 16, 2002.

Joint Resolution No. 14

(Senate Joint Resolution No. 8)

A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

State Highways - Intercounty Connector - Restart of Environmental Impact Statement Process

FOR the purpose of urging the Governor to instruct the Secretary of the Department of Transportation to restart and bring to its full conclusion a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) environmental impact statement process to study the Intercounty Connector (ICC), a limited-access, east-west, multi-modal connector that would accommodate general purpose, HOV/carpool, and bus-rapid-transit service, with integrated hiker-biker trails, to facilitate access between Montgomery County, Prince George's County, Greater Baltimore, and other locations throughout the State of Maryland.

WHEREAS, New road and highway construction in suburban Maryland has lagged significantly behind both population and job growth over the past several decades; and

WHEREAS, Traffic congestion in the Greater Washington region, particularly in Montgomery County and Prince George's County, is severe and has dramatically worsened in recent years, with no projects that will provide significant relief currently planned; and

WHEREAS, The Maryland Department of Transportation has indicated that the periods marked by severely congested conditions on the Capital Beltway will expand from the current average of five hours per day, to over fourteen hours per day by 2020, forcing hundreds of thousands of Maryland residents to endure long hours of delay each day, diverting many vehicle trips onto already overwhelmed secondary and arterial roads and inducing increased "cut-through" traffic in neighborhoods, severely impacting the safety and quality of life of pedestrians and motorists, limiting accessibility of jobs and affordable housing, and threatening the future of the local economy; and

WHEREAS, Severe traffic congestion is preventing residents, students, and businesses throughout the Baltimore-Washington area from taking full advantage of the many educational, cultural, employment, retail, professional service, and business opportunities for those in the Baltimore area who are being denied timely access to such opportunities in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, and vice-versa, and this reduced accessibility impacts all sectors of the regional economy,