

HOUSE BILL 543

R1

EMERGENCY BILL

7lr1161

By: **Delegates Reznik, Barkley, Barve, Carr, Cullison, Dumais, Fraser-Hidalgo, Frick, Gilchrist, Gutierrez, Hixson, Kaiser, Kelly, Korman, Kramer, Luedtke, A. Miller, Moon, Morales, Platt, Queen, Robinson, Waldstreicher, and Wilkins**

Introduced and read first time: January 30, 2017

Assigned to: Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **State Highway Administration – Watkins Mill Road Interchange Project**

3 FOR the purpose of requiring the State Highway Administration to undertake all steps
4 necessary to complete the Watkins Mill Road Interchange Project; specifying certain
5 requirements for the Project; requiring the Governor to appropriate a certain amount
6 of funding for the Project; stating the intent of the General Assembly; requiring the
7 Administration to submit an annual report to certain committees of the General
8 Assembly; making this Act an emergency measure; and generally relating to the
9 Watkins Mill Road Interchange Project.

10 BY adding to
11 Article – Transportation
12 Section 8–659
13 Annotated Code of Maryland
14 (2015 Replacement Volume and 2016 Supplement)

15 Preamble

16 WHEREAS, The Maryland General Assembly approved full funding, design, and
17 construction of the Watkins Mill Road Interchange in the Consolidated Transportation
18 Program (CTP) for fiscal years 2015 through 2020, including \$159.4 million for the project,
19 a projected start date of spring 2016, and projected completion in spring 2019; and

20 WHEREAS, The original project has been substantially altered and faces decreased
21 funding, delayed construction and completion, and a significant reduction in the scope of
22 the project in terms of traffic relief and promotion of economic development; and

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



WHEREAS, The Watkins Mill Road Interchange as originally planned will support increased economic development, reduce existing congestion at the I-270 and Maryland 124 interchange, and provide access from I-270 to the Metropolitan Grove MARC Station; and

WHEREAS, The Watkins Mill Road Interchange will bring over 250,000 square feet of mixed-use real estate, 930,000 square feet of office space, and 400 hotel rooms; and

WHEREAS, Several approved projects are contingent on a full diamond interchange to bring critical traffic relief to the area, including a FedEx distribution center estimated to bring 300 new jobs to the region, an expansion of Lockheed Martin offices and employment, and a relocation of the headquarters of the National Humane Society of the United States; and

WHEREAS, The area adjacent to the Watkins Mill Road Interchange has attracted significant employers that made investment decisions that presumed construction of a full interchange based on public commitments by the State of Maryland and a \$4.9 million investment from Montgomery County; and

WHEREAS, Properties on the east and west sides of I-270 at the location of the proposed highway improvement have become hubs for biotechnology companies and professional services; and

WHEREAS, Failure to construct the original full interchange at Watkins Mill Road will forfeit hundreds of jobs and untold revenue from increased economic development in the surrounding area; and

WHEREAS, Failure to honor the commitments made by the State to Montgomery County would compromise the project and decrease the potential for much needed jobs and economic growth in the upcounty region of Montgomery County; now, therefore,

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

Article – Transportation

8-659.

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “WATKINS MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT” MEANS THE PROJECT TO CONSTRUCT A NEW I-270 INTERCHANGE AT WATKINS MILL ROAD DESCRIBED IN THE CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEARS 2015 THROUGH 2020 UNDER STIP REFERENCE #MO8391.

(B) IT IS THE INTENT OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY THAT THE ADMINISTRATION PROMPTLY UNDERTAKE ALL STEPS NECESSARY TO COMPLETE THE PLANNING, ENGINEERING, RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION, AND CONSTRUCTION

FOR THE WATKINS MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEARS 2015 THROUGH 2020.

(C) (1) THE GOVERNOR SHALL APPROPRIATE THE FUNDS NECESSARY IN FISCAL YEARS 2018 THROUGH 2020 FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE WATKINS MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT.

(2) THE APPROPRIATIONS REQUIRED UNDER PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL BE MADE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM FOR FISCAL YEARS 2015 THROUGH 2020.

(D) THE WATKINS MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT SHALL BE CONSTRUCTED AND COMMENCE OPERATION ON OR BEFORE JUNE 30, 2020.

(E) (1) ON OR BEFORE DECEMBER 1 EACH YEAR UNTIL COMPLETION OF THE WATKINS MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT, IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 2-1246 OF THE STATE GOVERNMENT ARTICLE, THE ADMINISTRATION SHALL SUBMIT A REPORT ON THE STATUS OF THE WATKINS MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT TO THE SENATE BUDGET AND TAXATION COMMITTEE, THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE, THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE, AND THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE.

(2) THE REPORT REQUIRED UNDER THIS SUBSECTION SHALL INCLUDE:

(I) AN UPDATE ON THE PROGRESS OF THE PROJECT;

(II) ANY REVISED ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL COST OF THE PROJECT AND A STATEMENT OF THE REASONS FOR ANY COST SAVINGS OR COST INCREASES;

(III) A DESCRIPTION OF ANY CHANGES TO THE PROJECT;

(IV) PLANNED EXPENDITURES BY YEAR, CATEGORIZED BY PLANNING AND ENGINEERING, RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION, UTILITY RELOCATION, PERMITS, DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, AND OTHER CATEGORIES AS DETERMINED BY THE ADMINISTRATION;

(V) FUNDING SOURCES BY YEAR, CATEGORIZED BY:

1. FEDERAL FUNDS;

1 **2. SPECIAL FUNDS;**

2 **3. LOCAL CONTRIBUTIONS; AND**

3 **4. ANY OTHER REVENUE SOURCE; AND**

4 **(VI) ANY OTHER INFORMATION CONCERNING THE WATKINS**
5 **MILL ROAD INTERCHANGE PROJECT THAT THE ADMINISTRATION CONSIDERS**
6 **PERTINENT.**

7 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act is an emergency
8 measure, is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public health or safety, has
9 been passed by a yea and nay vote supported by three-fifths of all the members elected to
10 each of the two Houses of the General Assembly, and shall take effect from the date it is
11 enacted.