



*Queen
Anne's
County*

County Commissioners:

James J. Moran, At Large
Jack N. Wilson, Jr., District 1
J. Patrick McLaughlin, District 2
Philip L. Dumenil, District 3
Christopher M. Corchiarino, District 4

**THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS OF
QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY**

The Liberty Building
107 North Liberty Street
Centreville, MD 21617

e-mail: QACCommissioners&Administrator@qac.org

County Administrator: *Todd R. Mohn, PE*
Executive Assistant to County Commissioners: *Stephanie Jarrell*
County Attorney: *Patrick Thompson, Esquire*

February 14, 2024

The Honorable Sean Duffy
Secretary of Transportation
US Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Ave, SE
Washington, DC 20590

RE: Federal Designation for Congestion Management in the Chesapeake Bay Bridge Corridor

Dear Secretary Duffy,

The Queen Anne's County Commissioners are requesting Federal assistance to address a health, safety and welfare issue that is challenging Queen Anne's County, Maryland. We are requesting Federal assistance to provide a designation or implementation of a pilot project that would allow a 10 mile corridor of US 50/301 to implement unique congestion management strategies to address the unique character of the corridor during times of severe congestion.

Queen Anne's County has one of the most unique and vital segments of highway in the State of Maryland known as the "Bay Bridge Corridor" (US 50/301 from Queenstown, Maryland crossing the Chesapeake Bay). This corridor contains the approach to the single location for crossing the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland which is a regional bottleneck, routinely congested and subject to significant and lengthy backups. This situation is further exacerbated by the existing geography approaching the Bridge containing rivers and waterways resulting in no existing or possibility for alternative routes to relieve congestion. Any accident, any disabled vehicle, any debris in the road and even necessary road maintenance on this corridor can quickly turn into a lengthy back up that takes many hours to alleviate. This unique corridor needs to be treated fundamentally different than other roadways.

Within this corridor MD 18, a 2 lane road locally known as Main Street, is the only road that runs parallel to US 50/301. As soon as there is a slowdown on US 50/301 drivers begin to seek alternative routes clogging MD 18 which is our Main Street serving local residents and businesses. As MD 18 gets congested travelers seek alternative routes using neighborhood roads. Drivers try to get around the delay only to realize there is nowhere to go and they must return to US 50/301 to cross the Bay Bridge. The gridlock created can only be relived over time as traffic slowly crosses the Bay Bridge. Until then the impact is significant to the community. This routine pattern of congestion impacts our residential communities, emergency services, patient transport, fire response, schools, local businesses, and overall community safety.

The congestion also impacts public safety by limiting emergency response times and the ability to transport patients to medical facilities. During times of congestion response to calls and time to transport patients on US 50/301, MD 18 and surrounding areas can increase significantly.

It is vital that MD 18 remain open and available for emergency response and local traffic during peak travel times when severe congestion occurs. To do this Queen Anne's County would like to limit access to MD 18 to only travelers and residents with an origin or destination on MD 18 or connecting local road. This limited access would only be necessary during peak travel times when US 50/301 is experiencing significant congestion and backups resulting from Bay Bridge Traffic. Travelers with a destination crossing the Chesapeake Bay would need to remain on US 50/301 as it is the only roadway which will get them to their destination. Maryland Department of Transportation, the County, Emergency Services and Law Enforcement have discussed ways this could be done resulting in multiple questions related to implementation. Such as:

- During peak travel times with severe traffic congestion, can a State or local jurisdiction limit the use of State Highways based on the destination of the driver?
- If travelers have access to a road that allows them to get to their destination (such as US 50/301 when crossing the Chesapeake Bay) must they have access to all possible roads, state and local, to get to their destination?
- During Periods of severe congestion on US 50/301 can MD 18 be limited to "Local Traffic Only" or "No Thru Traffic" to minimize congestion on MD 18 and allow for better emergency response?
- Could access to MD 18 be limited to only travelers with a destination on MD 18 or local connecting road?
- Can the local jurisdiction manage congestion on a State road by limiting the number of vehicles on a 2 lane highway to insure emergency response is possible within a reasonable time?
- Is there a federal designation which can be applied to a limited section of highway to management congestion based on the unique circumstances or congestion events?
- Can a federal pilot project be created and applied to a limited section of highway to management congestion based on the unique circumstances or congestion events?

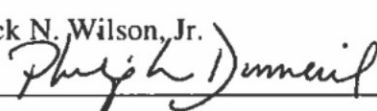
We would appreciate the opportunity to discuss the challenges of the Bay Bridge Corridor with you in detail and receive your guidance on how congestion can be managed. We would also like to discuss the ability to create and/or implement a pilot project in this location. We look forward to discussing our options and the possibilities with you soon.

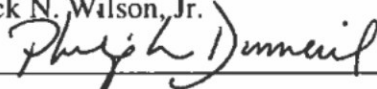
Thank you for your time and assistance.

Sincerely,

QUEEN ANNE'S COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS


Christopher M. Corchiarino, President


Jack N. Wilson, Jr.


Philip L. Dumenil


James J. Moran


J. Patrick McLaughlin