



**MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT**  
1800 Washington Boulevard • Baltimore MD 21230  
410-537-3000 • 1-800-633-6101 • [www.mde.maryland.gov](http://www.mde.maryland.gov)

Larry Hogan  
Governor

Ben Grumbles  
Secretary

Boyd Rutherford  
Lieutenant Governor

September 28, 2015

David Snyder, Chair  
Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee  
Washington Metropolitan Council of Governments  
777 North Capitol Street, NE  
Washington, D.C. 20002

Dear Chairman Snyder:

The Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) will not be able to attend the Metropolitan Washington Air Quality Committee (MWAQC) meeting on September 29, 2015. This letter serves to convey our position about the MWAQC comment letter regarding the draft 2015 Constrained Long Range Plan (CLRP) and the FY2015-2020 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

First and foremost, MDE supports the letter and the conformity determination for the region. We commend TPB for their continued technical excellence in showing that the region complies with Federal transportation conformity requirements.

We continue to have concerns over the need for a more up to date process for communicating the relationship between transportation and air quality challenges. The federal transportation conformity process does not look at the current or future ozone issues that MWAQC is working on or the climate change issues that are a very high priority for the Washington region. An enhanced communication process should be totally separate from the transportation conformity process, but the technical analyses on emission projections from the transportation sector, which is already being done, would be identical.

MDE asked that this issue be presented and discussed at the September 29<sup>th</sup> MWAQC meeting but the MWAQC TAC Conformity Subcommittee voted against such a briefing.

MDE also participates in the COG Multi-Sector Working Group process where goals for reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions for the transportation sector are being discussed. It is unlikely that the MDE proposal for an enhanced communication process for the progress the region is making in reducing GHG emissions will survive the workgroup decision making process because of the makeup of the workgroup. As you know, MDE has been raising this issue of needing an enhanced communication process for over three years.

We feel that this is a very important issue that should be discussed by the full membership of MWAQC.



Again, MDE appreciates your leadership on the air quality progress that MWAQC has helped achieve over the past few years. Please let me know if there is anything that MDE can do to help on this important issue.

Sincerely,



George (Tad) S. Aburn, Jr., Director  
Air and Radiation Management Administration

