

including BWI Airport, the Port of Baltimore, the University System of Maryland, and other key regional and statewide facilities; and

WHEREAS, The Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments has identified a growing transportation "crisis" in the region, despite years of sustained effort and investment by State and local governments to reduce vehicle demand through improved transit service, carpooling incentives, concentration of development around transit stations, employment policies favorable to flex-time schedules and teleworking, and other demand-reduction measures; and

WHEREAS, The Intercounty Connector (ICC) and other road and transit improvements throughout the region would serve to better connect the region and the many venues being proposed in the Baltimore-Washington region's Olympics bid for 2012; and

WHEREAS, The ICC has been on both Montgomery and Prince George's counties' Master Plans for over 30 years; and

WHEREAS, The Master Plan Alignment of the ICC is consistent with Maryland's Smart Growth laws because it links major job and population centers within existing priority funding areas, and all of its exits serve existing priority funding areas; and

WHEREAS, Montgomery County's and Prince George's County's original "wedges and corridors" General Plans, developed in the 1960's, identify the ICC as a critical east-west connection to support planned growth within the I-270 and I-95 corridors; and

WHEREAS, The Metropolitan Washington Council of Government's current Vision Plan for the Washington Region calls for improved circumferential links between the region's major corridors as one of the region's top transportation objectives; and

WHEREAS, The last Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) on the ICC was abandoned in 1997 before reaching any final conclusions on alternatives, and without completing the required steps identified in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA); and

WHEREAS, Abandoning the DEIS has left many key questions unanswered, including whether or not environmental impacts could be mitigated or avoided, and has led to no resolution under NEPA of a critical public facility issue; and

WHEREAS, According to the 1997 DEIS, the ICC on the Master Plan Alignment would provide a critical link between the I-270 and I-95 corridors, and "substantially reduce congestion," diverting up to 15,000 cars per day from the Capital Beltway and nearly 80,000 per day from congested neighborhood roads and arterial highways; and

WHEREAS, Alternative east-west routes on the Master Plan Alignment, including alternatives to upgrade existing roads, were found in the DEIS to be less effective than the ICC in meeting east-west transportation demands, cause equal or greater environmental damage, and result in more disruptions to established communities and more displacements of existing businesses and residences; and