

# ***A Maryland Bill to Align Transportation Spending with Climate Goals***

Brian O'Malley, President & CEO with Central Maryland  
Transportation Alliance

with analysis by Miguel Moravec, Senior Associate RMI

Transit Choices

May 23, 2024

# What the bill does

The bill requires MDOT to analyze the impacts of greenhouse gas emissions and vehicle miles traveled (VMT) for highway capacity expansion projects over \$50 million.

This is important so MDOT can track progress on our climate goals and shape the design of future projects early enough in the process.

# Why it's important



Credit: Getty Images

## Why it's important



**“We found IIJA could be an important part of the U.S. response to climate change. Or it could lead to more greenhouse gas pollution than the trajectory we are currently on. Where the actual outcome falls within that range will depend on the decisions made by state, federal, and local governments about how to spend the money made available by IIJA.”**

**GEORGETOWN**  
**CLIMATE CENTER**

# Why it's important

<https://www.theguardian.com/business/2024/feb/29/biden-spending-highways-public-transport-climate-crisis>

## US spends billions on roads rather than public transport in 'climate time bomb'

New analysis finds money from Biden's \$1.2tn infrastructure bill has overwhelmingly been spent on widening highways for cars



Of reported funds dispersed to states, more than half – around \$70bn – have been spent on the resurfacing and expansion of highways. Photograph: Jim Lo Scalzo/EPA

**Oliver Milman**

Thu 29 Feb 2024 07:00 EST

Roads, roads and more roads. The US is continuing to spend billions of dollars on expanding enormous highways rather than fund public transport, with a landmark infrastructure bill lauded by **Joe Biden** only further accelerating the dominance of cars at the expense, critics say, of communities and the climate.

Since the passage of the enormous \$1.2tn **bipartisan infrastructure law** in 2021, hailed by Biden as a generational effort to upgrade the US's crumbling bridges, roads, ports and public transit, money has overwhelmingly poured into the maintenance and widening of roads rather than improving the threadbare network of bus, rail and cycling options available to Americans, a new analysis has found.

# Why it's important

- Maryland, under the Climate Solutions Now Act, has set a goal to cut greenhouse gas emissions 60% by 2031.
- The transportation sector is the number one source of greenhouse gas emission in Maryland.
- The Maryland Department of the Environment's new [Climate Pollution Reduction Plan](#) indicates that adoption of electric vehicles alone will not be enough; reducing VMT is necessary for the state to meet its climate targets.



# Why it's important

In an analysis of federal award obligations reported to USAspending.gov, Transportation for America has evaluated over 1,000 Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration-funded transportation projects and awards in Maryland, totaling \$1,324,267,306 in obligated funds

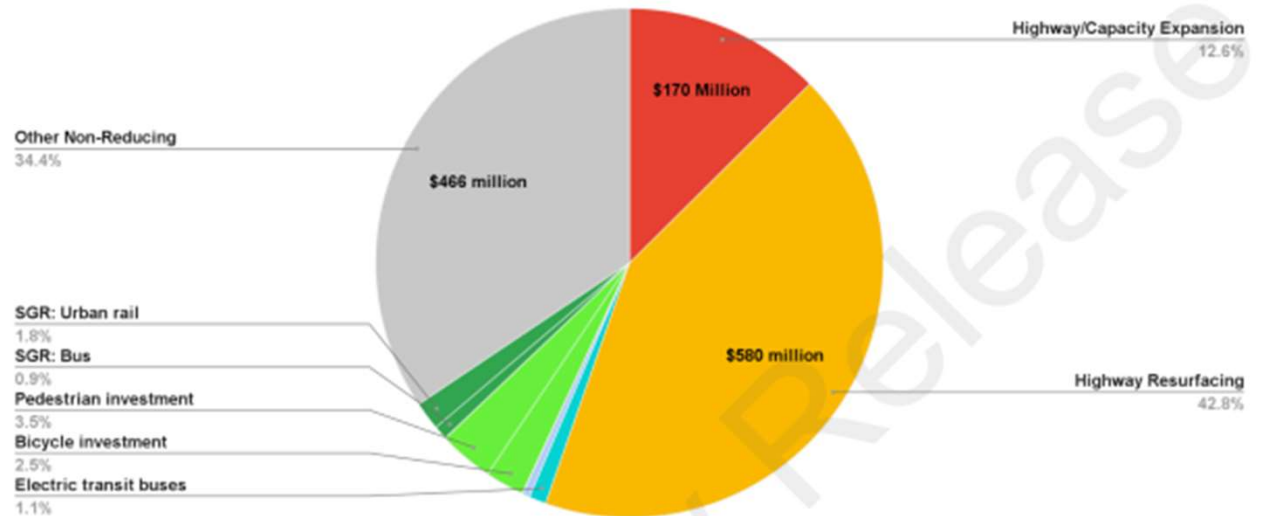


IIJA Spending Analysis  
Preliminary Release - MD  
February 26, 2024  
[www.t4america.org](http://www.t4america.org)

## Bipartisan Infrastructure Law Spending Report - Maryland

### Obligated IIJA Funds – Maryland

Data from USAspending.gov, updated 2/15/24. Includes obligated discretionary and formula funds. Analyzes 31.33% of anticipated FHWA, ~10% of FTA IIJA FY22-26 apportionments



# Expanding lanes fails to reduce congestion

## 100 Largest Urban Areas in US, 1993-2017

Lane miles  
increase



42%

Population  
increase



32%



# Expanding lanes fails to reduce congestion

*Across US metro areas, freeway capacity grew faster than population, yet delay exploded*

Lane miles  
increase



42%

Population  
increase



32%

Time spent in  
congestion



144%

1993 - 2017



# Analysis: Climate-Aligned Transportation in Maryland

Miguel Moravec  
Rocky Mountain Institute







**Lane expansion:  
fails to reduce  
congestion,  
has adverse  
climate impacts**





RMI's home state leads nation  
with **mode shift** policy

# Colorado GHG Planning Standard: prioritized mode shift to meet climate targets



**COLORADO**  
Official State Web Portal

Colorado approves nation-leading rule to cut greenhouse gas emissions by shifting how it plans the state's transportation system





# Real impact: shifted \$1.5 billion from road expansions into multimodal

Compliance Category	GHG Mitigation Strategies	Estimated 2030 GHG reduction (metric tons)	Share of GHG target
<b>Updated 2050 transportation plan, modified projects, and revised model assumptions – 80% of 2030 Target</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Less highway widening (I-25 Central, C-470, etc),</li> <li>- Complete 5 Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridors,</li> <li>- Add \$900 million in multimodal (transit, bike, ped),</li> <li>- Updated telework model assumption to 25%,</li> <li>- Updated land use model assumption (more infill development than anticipated in 2019)</li> </ul>	680,000	79.4%
<b>Additional Programmatic Investment ("off-model" strategies) – 9% of 2030 Target</b>	Additional signal timing	50,000	5.8%
	Increased Bustang service within DRCOG area	3,000	0.4%
	Pedestrian Facilities, Complete Streets retrofits	20,000	2.3%
<b>Mitigation Action Plan (voluntary land use and parking management strategies) – 11% of 2030 Target</b>	Increase residential density	13,548	1.6%
	Increase job density	2,309	0.3%
	Mixed-use TOD (high intensity)	8,588	1.0%
	Mixed-use TOD (moderate intensity)	18,397	2.1%
	Reduce or eliminate parking requirements and set low maximum levels (residential)	37,750	4.4%
	Reduce or eliminate parking requirements and set moderate maximum levels (residential)	18,332	2.1%
	Reduce or eliminate parking requirements and set maximum levels (commercial)	4,373	0.5%
	Adopt local Complete Streets standards	369	0%
<b>Total</b>		<b>856,666</b>	<b>100%</b>



**5 Bus Rapid Transit Corridors**

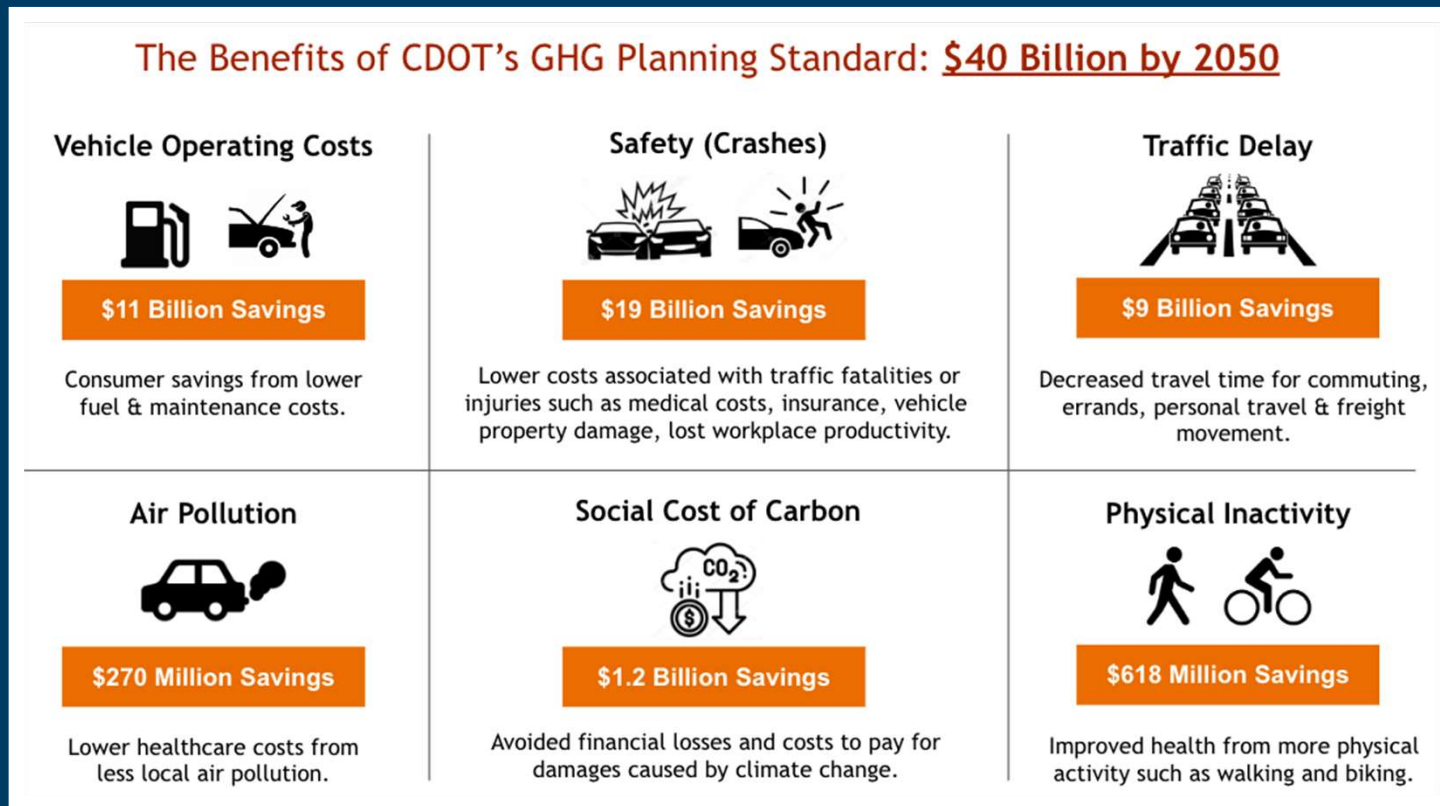


**Bike, Walk, and Transit Networks**



**Transit Oriented Development**

# Cost Savings: CO forecasts \$40 billion net benefit for residents by 2050





What if Maryland unlocked the benefits of climate-aligned **mode shift**?

INTRODUCING

# Smarter MODES Calculator

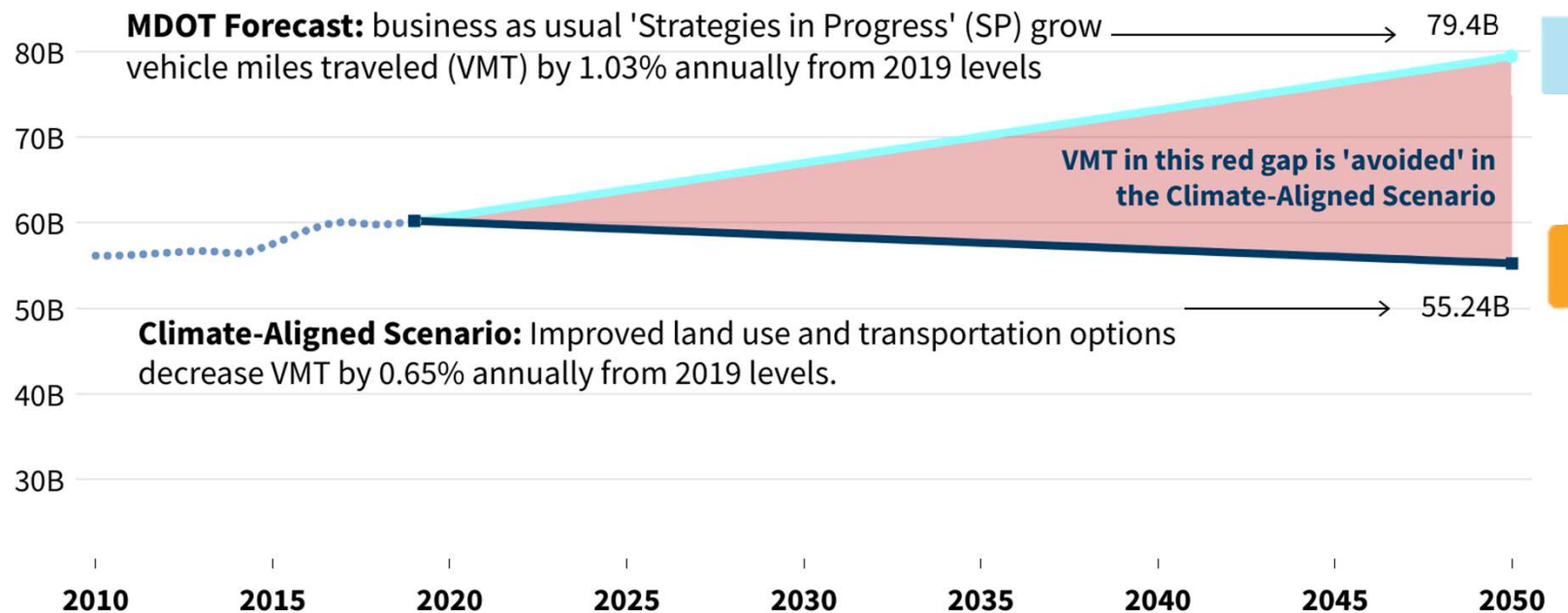
Smarter Mobility Options for Decarbonization, Equity, and Safety



# What if Maryland unlocked the benefits of climate-aligned mode shift?

## Vehicle Miles Traveled, Maryland

● Historic ● MDOT Forecast ■ Climate-Aligned

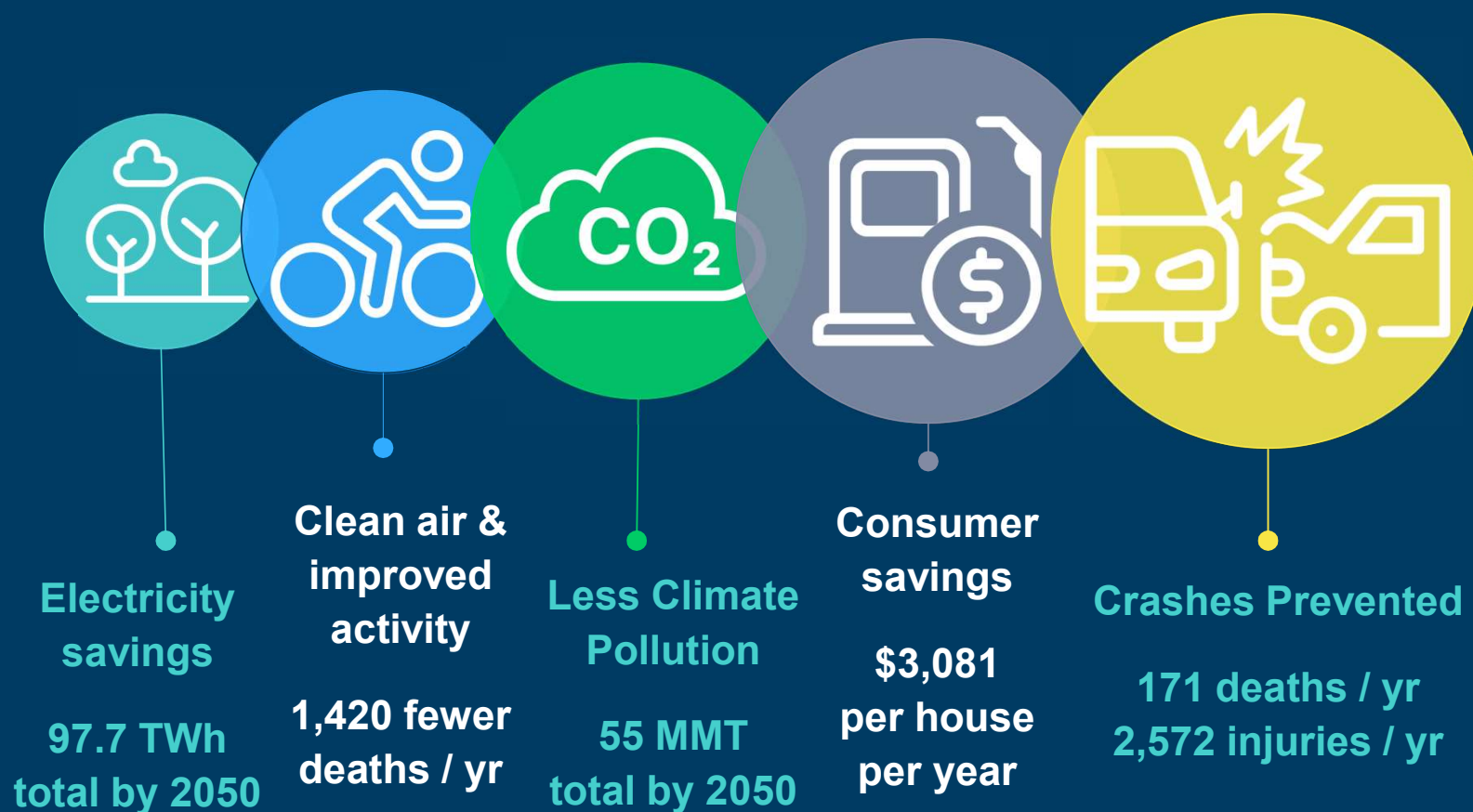


Strategies in Progress (SP)

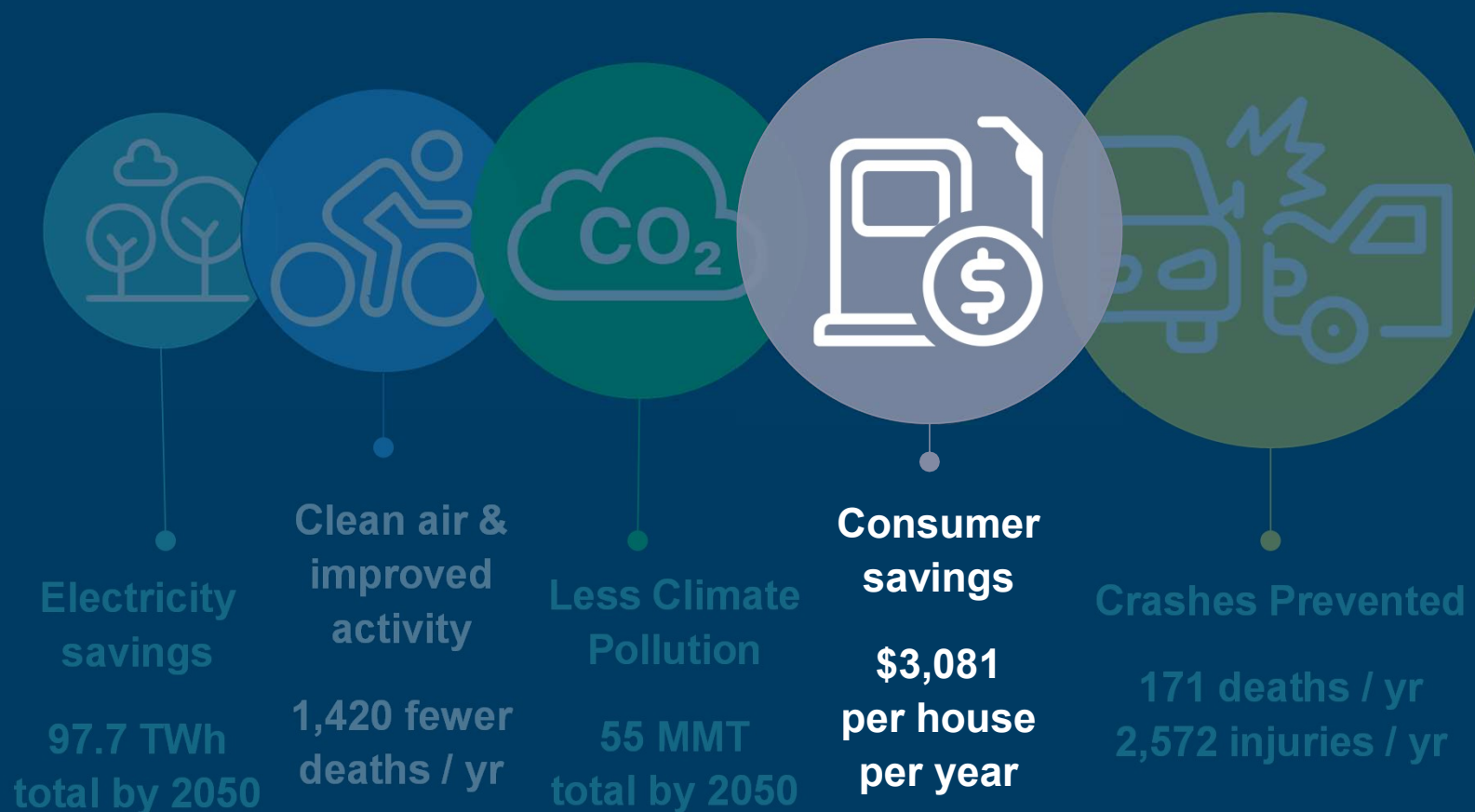
20% VMT per capita reduction



# Results: **climate-aligned transportation** leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



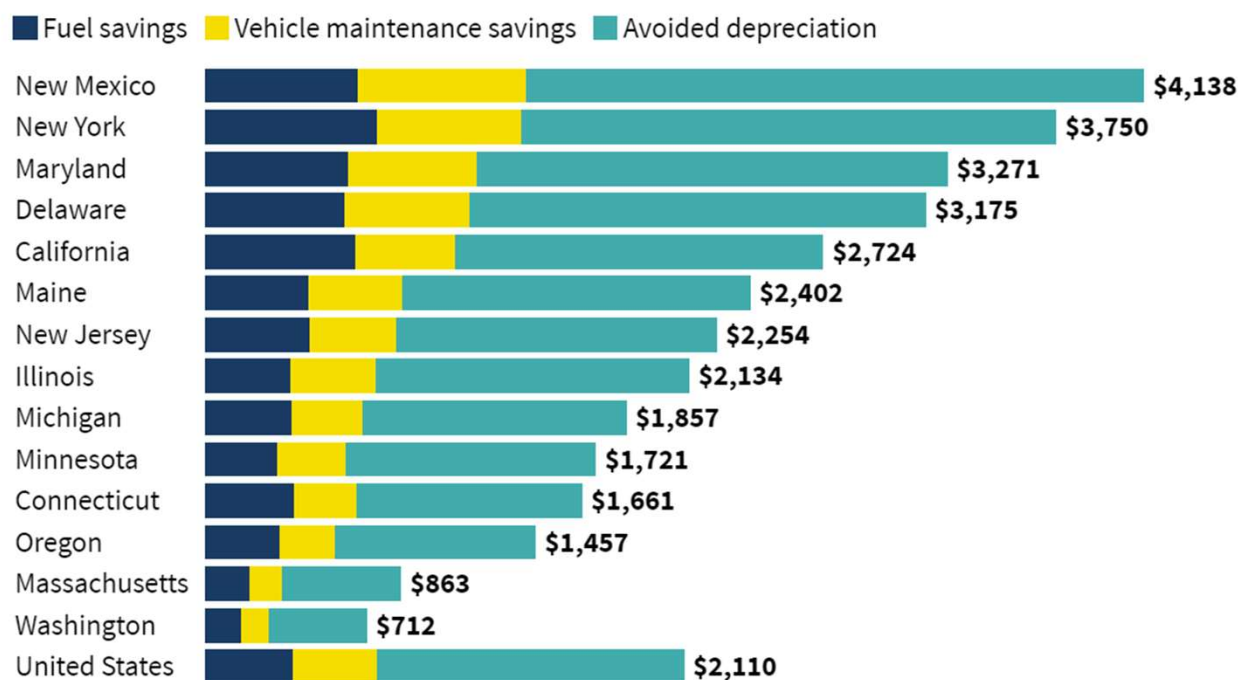
# Results: **climate-aligned transportation** leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



# Results: climate-aligned transportation leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



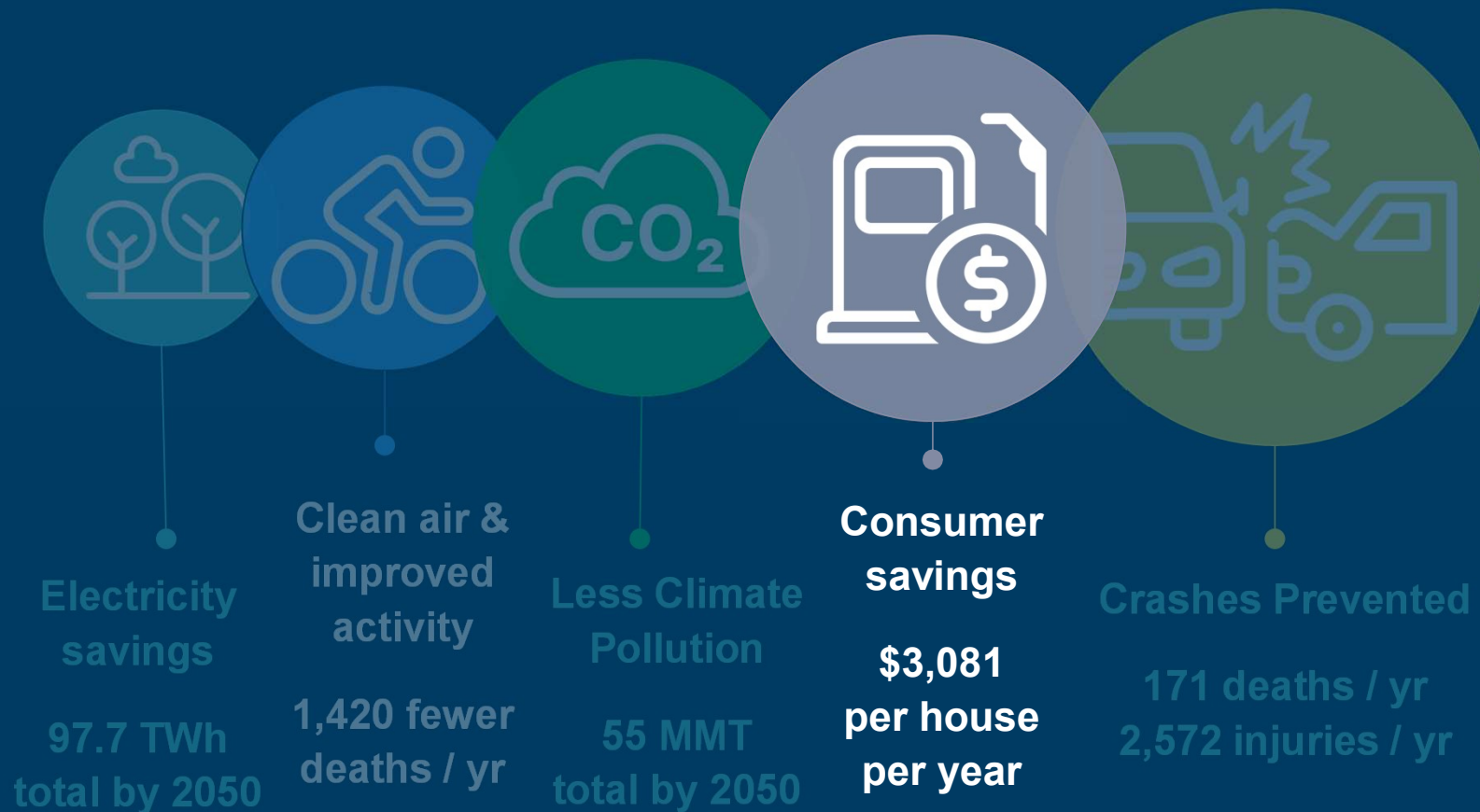
## Average annual household savings from a 20% per-capita VMT reduction in select US states



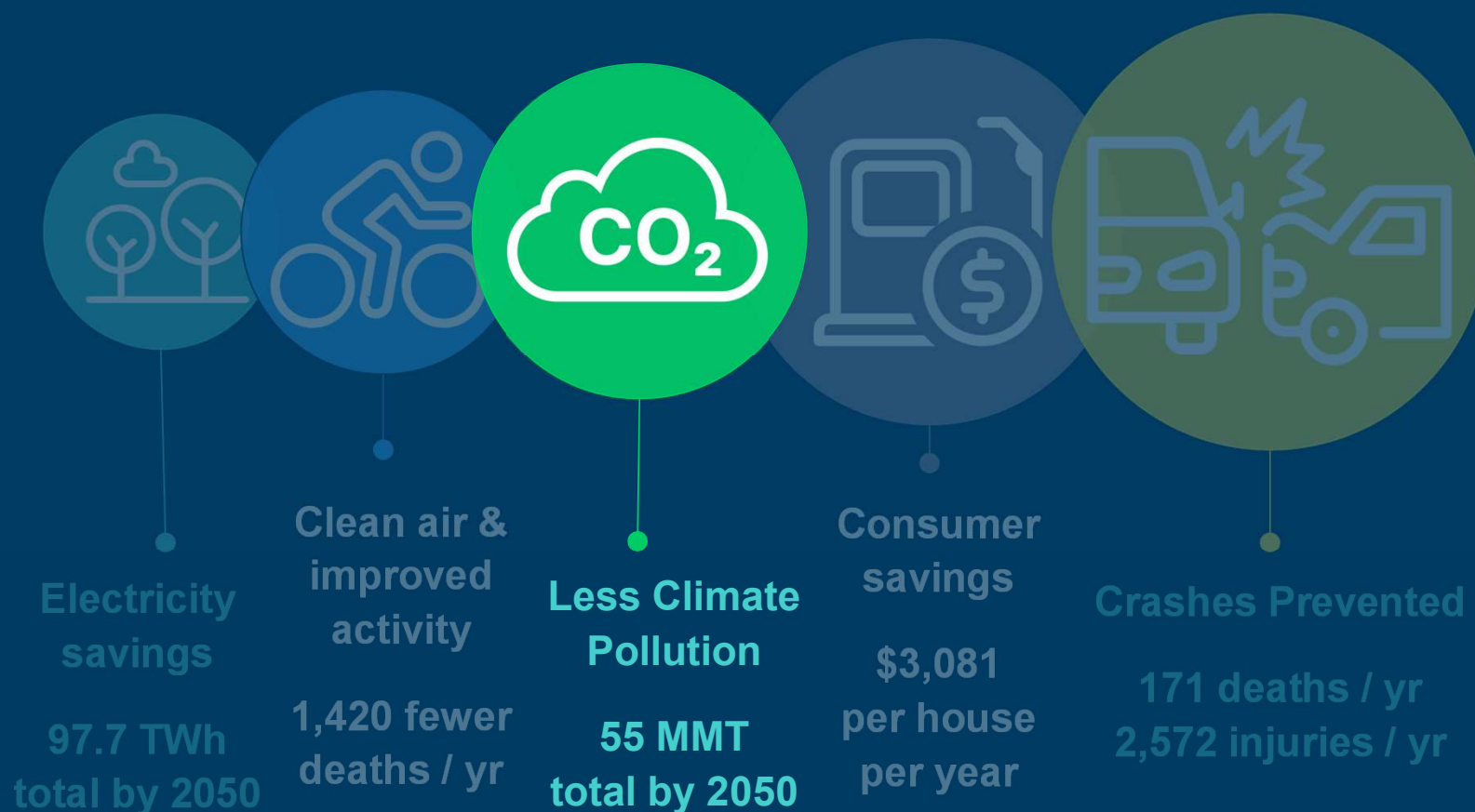
Results assume a mid-growth EV scenario and use state-provided VMT forecasts, where available



# Results: **climate-aligned transportation** leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



# Results: **climate-aligned transportation** leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



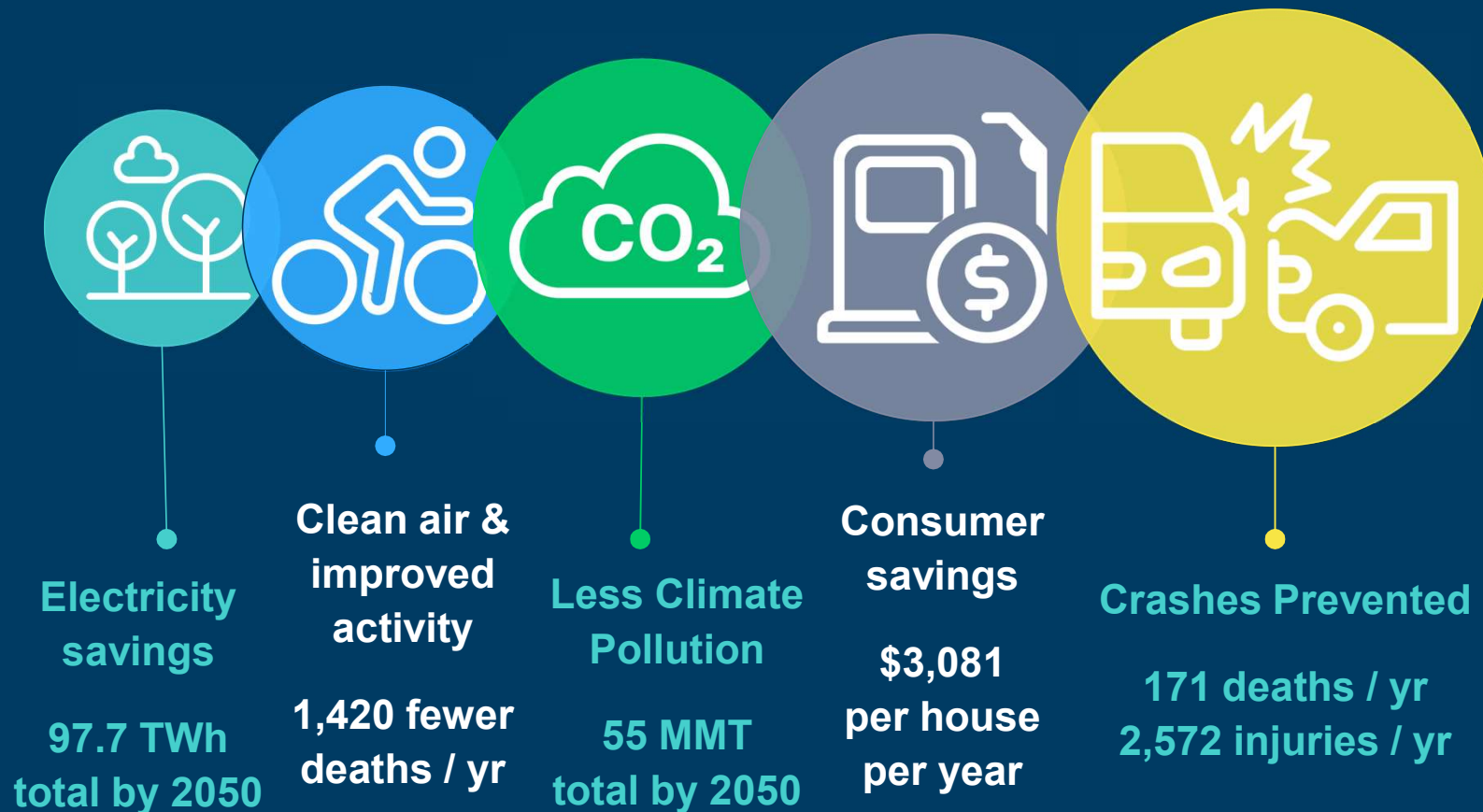


**Results: climate-aligned transportation leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050**

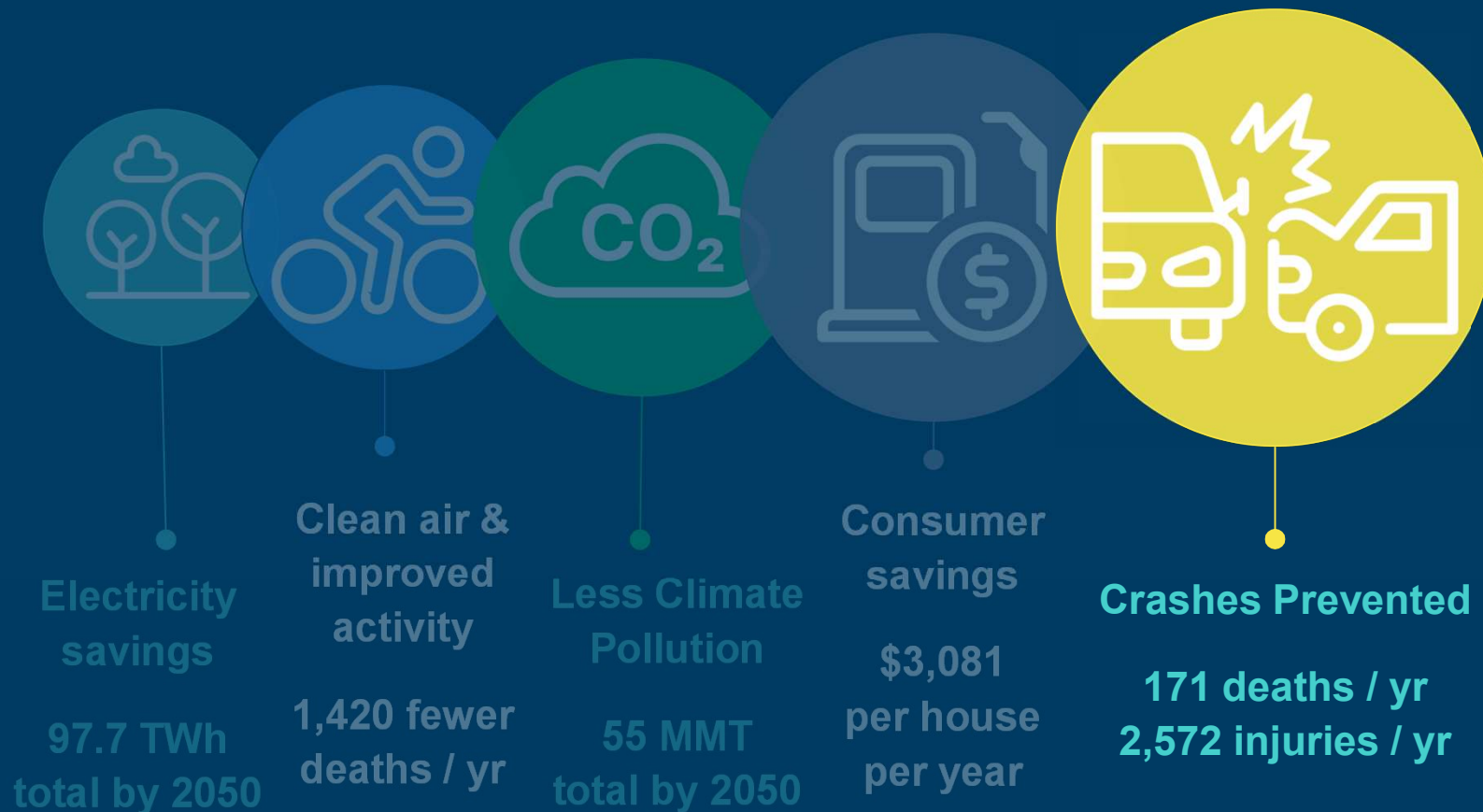


**Same pollution savings as installing 557  
wind turbines, running them now  
through 2050**

# Results: **climate-aligned transportation** leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



# Results: **climate-aligned transportation** leads to huge climate, safety, & consumer savings by 2050



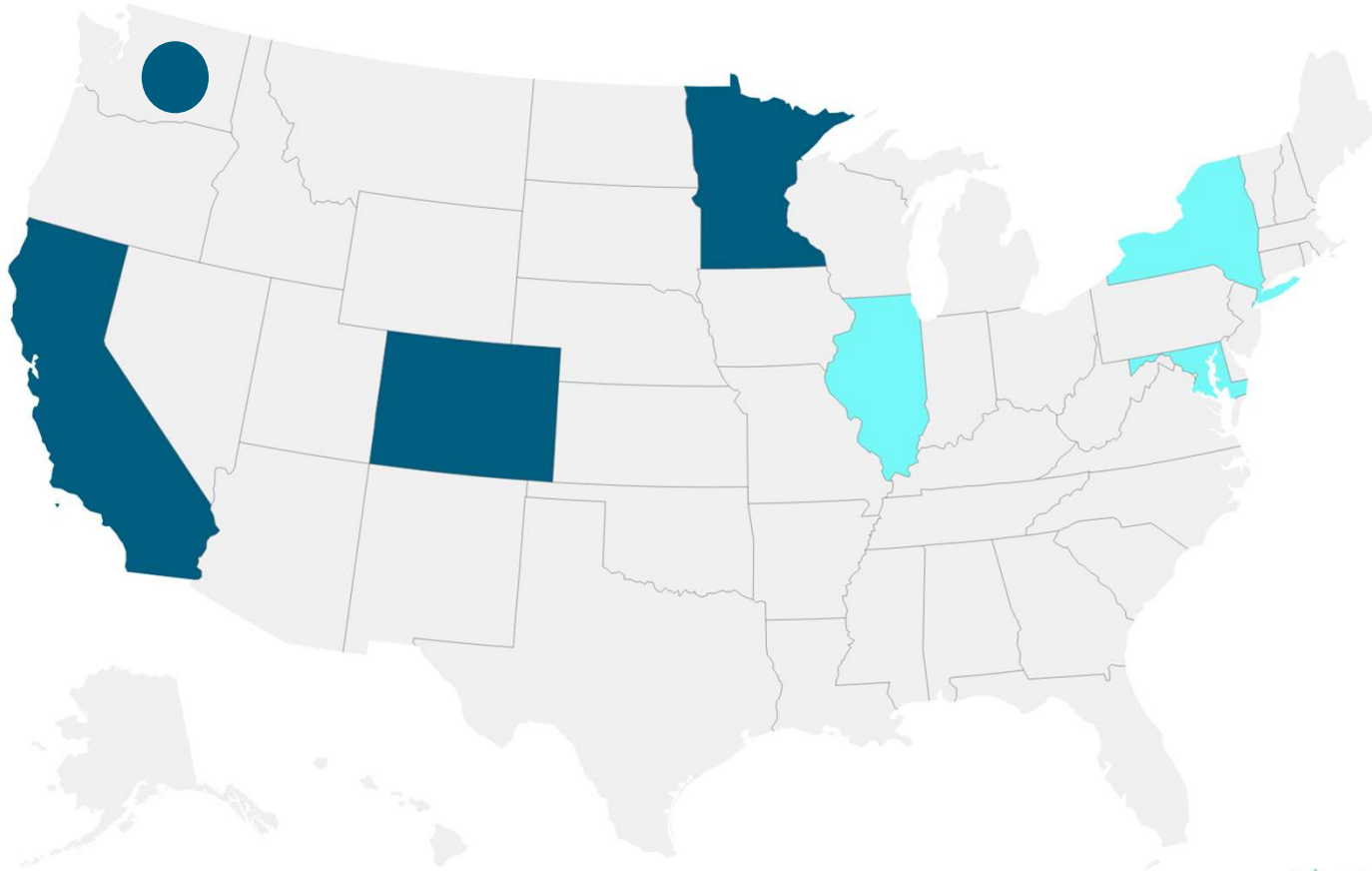
## **Conclusion: climate-aligned transportation in Maryland would...**

- 1. Save MD Households \$3k per year**
- 2. Avoid 55 MMT by 2050, aligning w/ CSNA**
- 3. Unlock significant health & safety benefits**

---

## State DOT Climate-Aligned Investment Planning Standard

■ Codified Standard   ■ No legislative direction   ■ Pending legislation



### Pending Legislation:

- **Maryland HB 836**
- **New York S1981A**
- **Illinois SB 3934**





# Questions:

Miguel Moravec  
[mmoravec@rmi.org](mailto:mmoravec@rmi.org)



# The bill's status in Maryland

## **THE TRANSPORTATION & CLIMATE ALIGNMENT ACT PASSES THROUGH THE HOUSE!**

Thank you to bill sponsors Del. Edelson, Senator Lam, and House leadership!



**Del. Edelson  
Bill Sponsor**



**Chair Barnes**



**Chair Korman**



**Subcommittee  
Chair Watson**



# The Coalition supporting it



# The Coalition supporting it



# The Coalition supporting it



# How you can get involved

- Fill out the form

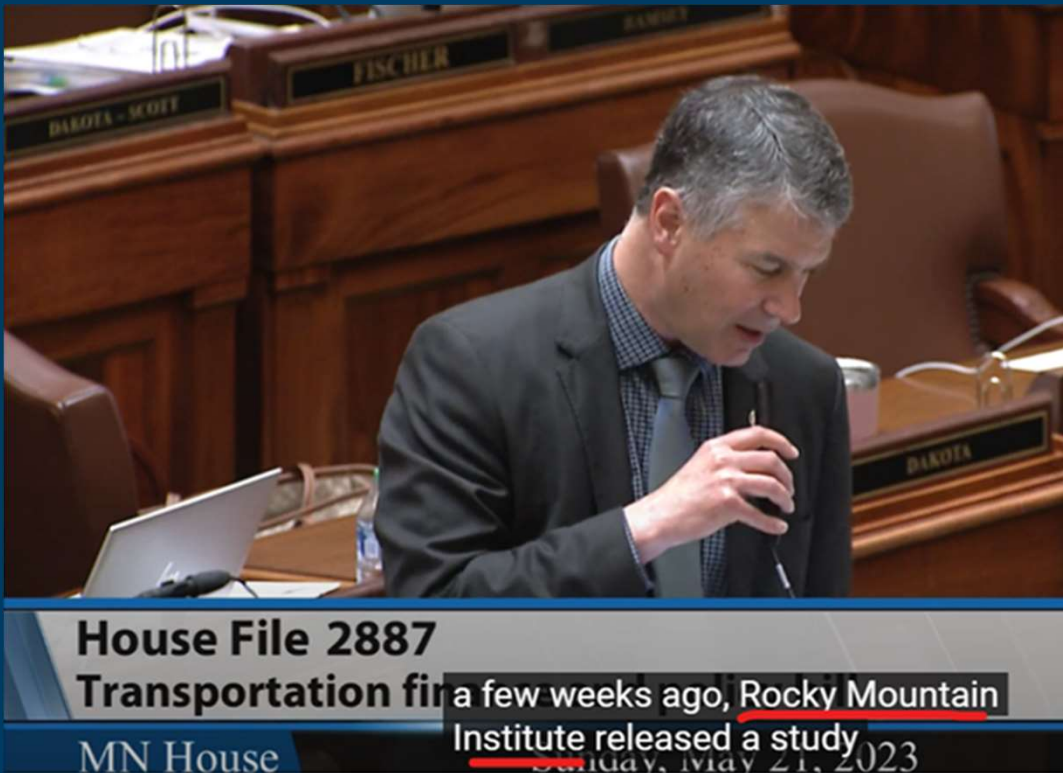
[https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeu-6lRZdLhaY18Ikv5VbV86uzuXi-FebUx3h1a\\_ywuufm6Lg/viewform](https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeu-6lRZdLhaY18Ikv5VbV86uzuXi-FebUx3h1a_ywuufm6Lg/viewform)





Who is RMI?

# RMI's **mode shift** analysis frequently cited in policy discussions:



FINANCE&COMMERCE

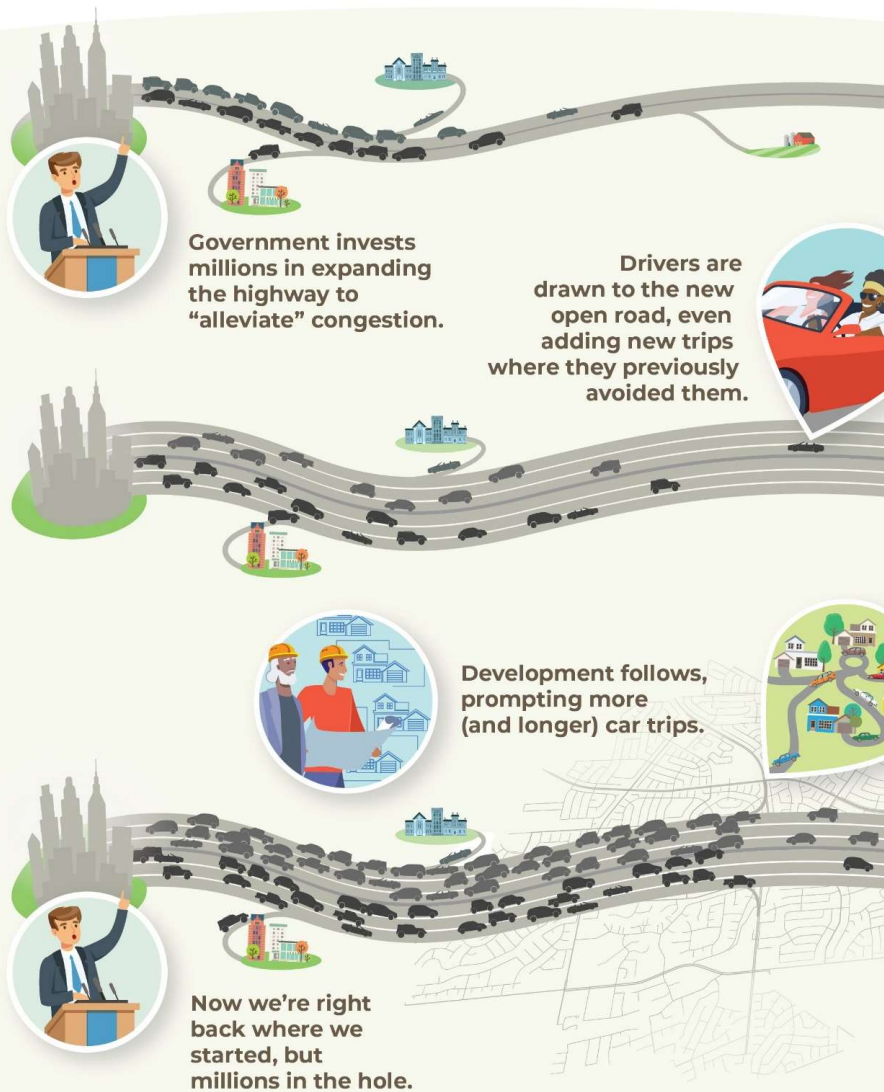
STREETS**BLOG**

 Planetizen

ENERGY NEWS NETWORK

 THE BALTIMORE BANNER

 CleanTechnica



## Induced demand

How highway expansion actually creates more traffic



more expansions  
=  
more traffic



# more traffic = more climate pollution

