

The ICC: It's Climate Change!

A Few Inconvenient Truths About the Intercounty Connector and Global Warming

Cars, trucks and other vehicles generate roughly one-third of greenhouse gases in the United States, and may be our fastest growing source of global warming air pollution.

We must cut greenhouse gas emissions sharply and soon if we are to ward off global warming's worst consequences. We have perhaps 10 years to take serious action and put ourselves on the path to reducing global warming emissions worldwide by 50 to 80 percent by 2050. These reductions must come from all sectors – including transportation – and technology alone can't do the job.

Global warming emissions increases triggered by the ICC would probably wipe out much of the emissions reductions that might be achieved in Montgomery County under the Clean Cars Act recently signed into law by Governor O'Malley. Here's why.

Three major transportation studies in the past 10 years have found that the ICC would sharply increase automobile use in the region, and would destroy hundreds of acres of mature forests.... the very forests we need to draw carbon from the atmosphere. Those same studies show that the ICC would provide almost no relief to traffic congestion. In fact, the latest of those studies shows that the ICC would increase traffic on the Beltway and other major commuter routes.

That study, the 2006 Environmental Impact Statement published by the Federal Highway Administration and the Maryland State Highway Administration, also found that the ICC would increase vehicle miles driven by 20 percent in the ICC Study Area. This translates to roughly a 20-percent increase in global warming emissions from cars, trucks and other vehicles.

This probably underestimates ICC-related global warming emissions, by excluding emissions from:

- Car and truck trips from the thousands of acres of new growth – mostly suburban sprawl – that the agencies admit the ICC would trigger;
- Clear cutting thousands of acres of forest for the ICC and the sprawl it would trigger.
- Building, operating and maintaining the ICC and the vehicles that would use it.

The Bush and Ehrlich administrations refused to assess the ICC's impacts on the region's global warming emissions. Instead, they devoted less than two pages to global warming in their 10,850-page ICC Environmental Impact Statement. Governor O'Malley should do better.

When it comes to global warming, "business as usual" leads to catastrophe. Even without the ICC, vehicle miles driven in the region are projected to increase significantly. This is "business as usual". The ICC equals business as usual.... and then some.

The ICC would cost more than \$3 billion. The billions spent on this single toll highway would not be available for the Purple Line or other urgently needed transit projects that would generate less pollution, help take cars off of our crowded roads, and give people real transportation options.

**Want to Help Stop Global Warming?
Help Stop the ICC.**

Tell Governor O'Malley to Drop the ICC Immediately.

Call and Write Governor O'Malley

Phone: (800) 811-8336 Email: governor@gov.state.md.us

For more information, write to stoptheiccnnow@igc.org or visit maryland.sierraclub.org