'Congestion emergency' costs DC-area drivers around $2,000 a year

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Sitting in traffic is not only frustrating, it's expensive. Drivers in the D.C. area are losing money and access to jobs because of traffic. (Getty Images)

The average driver in the D.C. area lost 87 hours to traffic congestion in 2017, at a cost of $2,007 in lost time and wasted fuel, according to the transportation group TRIP.

Congestion in the Baltimore region caused the average driver to lose 50 hours, at a cost of $1,220.

The TRIP report also stated Maryland has the busiest urban highways and roads in the nation, and that commutes in the state were the second longest in the country. The average daily commute for Maryland residents was 32.7 minutes, behind just New York at 33 minutes.

"It is absolutely necessary that Maryland tackle this issue of congestion which is choking our quality of life," said Maryland Transportation Secretary Pete Rahn, who called this a "congestion emergency."

Rahn urged action on Gov. Larry Hogan's proposals, which include widening Interstates 270 and 495 through public-private partnerships.

Congestion also impacts job accessibility, according to TRIP.

There are approximately 2.6 million jobs available to D.C.-area residents within a one-hour drive, but only 24 percent of those jobs can be reached in a 30-minute drive.

Read the full report online.

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