



THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
CHARLES COUNTY DELEGATION

January 28, 2020

Hon. Maggie McIntosh, Chair
Hon. Kumar Barve, Chair
and Members of the Appropriations and
Environment & Transportations Committees
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: HB 205 – Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project – Requirements and Funding

Dear Chair McIntosh, Chair Barve and Members of the Appropriations and Environment & Transportation Committees:

The purpose of this letter is to express SUPPORT of the Charles County Delegation for HB 205: Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project – Requirements and Funding. The Charles County Delegation concurs with the Charles County Commissioners that fixed-route, high-capacity transit service in the MD Rte. 5/US Rte. 301 corridor is the county's – and the Southern Maryland region's – highest transit priority. This transit project, which would connect the Branch Avenue WMATA station to Waldorf and White Plains, has been in the works for three decades, and is the subject of five separate state studies. This bill reflects the commitment by the Maryland Department of Transportation that is needed to move this project forward. The bill requires the state to commit funding towards the final environmental planning phase of the project, unlocking the ability to apply for federal funds, and does not commit the state to final construction in any way.

At the 2018 Charles County Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) Listening Session, former MDOT Secretary Rahn indicated his desire to move the project onto the 2023 CTP with the bus rapid transit modality. Despite our disagreement with the former Secretary about the mode, we were glad to hear the former Secretary commit to the project in some form. We were disappointed to see his promise made at that meeting fail to appear on the next iteration of the CTP and hope that this bill will rectify mistake.

The Southern Maryland region anticipates significant population growth as well as thru-traffic growth, with the opening of the new Nice-Middleton Bridge in 2023 that will put even greater strain on this transit corridor than we see today. With two hour commutes, lost time with family, and the social and health impacts that this burden brings, our residents' quality of life is at stake here. We urge you to act now by supporting HB 205 in order to help solve this serious transportation problem in Southern Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Edith J. Patterson".

Delegate Edith J. Patterson
District 28 - Charles County Delegation Chair