



**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT & TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
HOUSE BILL 107 -- BALTIMORE CITY - COMPLETE STREETS PROGRAM FUNDING - TRAFFIC
AND VEHICLE MONITORING SYSTEMS**

March 10, 2020

**DONALD C. FRY
PRESIDENT & CEO
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

Position: Support with Amendments

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) supports House Bill 107 with amendments. House Bill 107 establishes the Baltimore City Complete Streets Program Fund and requires revenues from Automated Traffic Enforcement (ATE) in the City to be dedicated to the fund.

According to the National Complete Streets Coalition, more than 1,500 complete streets policies have been passed in the United States. Baltimore City joined that list in 2018 with the passage of the Complete Streets Ordinance. Complete Streets laws and policies are intended to ensure that the public rights-of-way are designed to safely and efficiently accommodate all users of the transportation network, including pedestrians, cyclists, transit users, drivers, and those who travel via scooter or other new mobility options. Baltimore City's ordinance was particularly strong in the area of equity and in ensuring that projects are designed and prioritized through an equity lens. This is of particular significance in Baltimore City, where approximately 30 percent of households do not have a car and rely on other means of transportation to access education, training, and jobs.

In 2018, the General Assembly also created the Statewide Complete Streets Program as a competitive matching grant program within the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to fund approved local complete streets activities (Chapters 721 and 722). The legislation did not mandate an appropriation; however, and the Governor's Fiscal Year 2020 and Fiscal Year 2021 budgets did not appropriate funds for the program.

By design, ATE systems are intended to enhance public safety by automatically issuing citations to individuals who violate certain traffic laws, such as speeding or running a red light. Research indicates that ATE systems, when implemented appropriately, are effective behavior modification tools in that they reduce traffic safety violations in the areas that they are operational. Because complete streets laws and policies are also designed to improve the safety of the traveling public, the policy proposal to designate ATE revenues to support the implementation of complete streets is sound.

The GBC supports House Bill 107 with two amendments. The first amendment would remove the provision of the bill that would designate the funds to a State account for re-appropriation to the Baltimore City and instead structure the fund so the revenues remain within the City. Secondly, House Bill 107 provides that Baltimore City may recover the cost of implementing and administering the vehicle height monitoring system from the revenues of that program prior to distributing to the Baltimore City Complete Streets Fund, but does not contain similar provisions for the speed monitoring systems, red light cameras, or school bus monitoring cameras. The GBC suggests that the bill be amended to allow the City to recover the cost of administering and implementing all ATE programs before the revenues are distributed to the Baltimore City Complete Streets Fund.

GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • www.gbc.org

This bill is also consistent with a key tenet in *Gaining the Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland*, a report published by the GBC that identifies eight core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth:

Superior transportation infrastructure with reliable funding mechanisms. An essential prerequisite of a competitive business environment includes well-funded and maintained highway, transit, port and airport infrastructure that provides reliable and efficient options to move people, goods and services.

Finally, House Bill 107 is consistent with the Greater Baltimore Committee's 2020 Legislative Priorities, which advocate for policymakers to implement a balanced transportation policy and funding priorities that create interconnected, multimodal transportation networks and promote equitable investment in systems across regions, modes, and communities.

For these reasons, the Greater Baltimore Committee urges a favorable report with amendments on House Bill 107.

The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 65-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.