



House Bill 1125

Transit - Grant Funding for Local Service - Alterations

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Appropriations Committee

Date: March 7, 2023

From: Dominic J. Butchko and Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1125. This bill codifies and stabilizes the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) grant program that provides funding to counties and municipalities to support their local transit systems. The bill also requires an annual inflationary adjustment for the grants provided by the LOTS program and State support for Ride On in Montgomery County and The Bus in Prince George's County.

Marylanders in every region of the state rely on public transportation systems, supported by the LOTS program, to commute both to and from work as well as within their communities at large. The vast majority of these systems are developed, operated, and maintained by county governments. Following the pandemic, previously predictable revenue streams and ridership rates declined dramatically and have yet to fully stabilize. This, in turn, adds challenges for these local systems, leaving them unable to make multi-year service plans and commitments. HB 1125 seeks to provide predictability for LOTS, both putting the LOTS grant program into statute and by tying future grant distributions to inflation.

Counties support HB 1125 as a commonsense bill. Predictability helps counties to better plan for future operations and maintain continuity of service. Accordingly, MACo urges the Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE** report for HB 1125.