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**THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
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**HB 1125 – Transit - Grant Funding for Local Service – Alterations**

**March 7<sup>th</sup>, 2023**

**Appropriations Committee**

Chairman Barnes, Vice-Chair Chang, Esteemed Colleagues, thank you for the opportunity to present on my bill, HB 1125, Grant Funding for Local Service.

HB 1125 is primarily a funding bill with two main functions: 1) to add an inflation adjustor to the two largest county-run transit agencies in the state, Montgomery County’s “Ride On” and Prince Georges County’s “The Bus” and 2) to codify and set a funding level for locally operated transit system grants that provide aid to every count in the state.

The primary purpose of the Office of Local Transit Support (OLTS) is to provide a variety of technical assistance services to the Local Operating Transit Systems (LOTS) operating in the State of Maryland. These services include federal and state regulatory compliance, operations, management, planning, and training. A county's LOTS services vary in relation to the jurisdiction's size and population density. Some jurisdictions have extensive fixed-route service, while others offer demand-response service that provides door-to-door transportation.

The largest county-run transit agencies in the state are Ride On in Montgomery County and the Bus in Prince George’s County. WMATA, which receives an annual inflation adjustor, overlaps extensively with both counties and can adjust its service because of the county services that are provided. HB 1125 will provide the same inflation adjustor for Ride On and The Bus so they can maintain their services accordingly. With recent inflation rates, it is essential that these adjusts are made to safeguard access to transit in two of its largest counties.

The second part of HB 1125, codifies and sets a funding level for the locally operated transit system grants which go to every county in the state. These grants have been operating off the books with no formal legislative language and no certainty for the counties that receive those grants. During the height of the pandemic, MDOT decided to significantly cut the funding counties received, and because there was no statutory language indicating the funding source or level, they were able to do so. This bill would provide certainty to every county that they will receive a baseline level of funding that will also grow with inflation.

This bill is an important step in ensuring Maryland appropriately funds all local transit systems, investing in a more equitable system to connect Marylanders.

Thank you for your time, I encourage a favorable report on HB 1125.