

# **HB0950\_Maryland\_Transit\_Administration\_Locally\_Ope**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



**TESTIMONY FOR HB0950**  
**Maryland Transit Administration - Locally Operated Transit Systems**  
**Mandatory Funding**

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Edelson

**Committee:** Appropriations, Budget and Tax

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Aileen Alex, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0950 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

HB0950 requires that, starting in Fiscal Year 2026, the state budget include an annual appropriation of at least \$80 million to fund the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS). LOTS provide transit service in each of Maryland's 23 counties and other jurisdictions. LOTS helps to serve the needs of urban, rural, and suburban communities and provide Marylanders with critical access to jobs, education, food, healthcare, and recreation.

The need for public transportation in Maryland's urban areas is well documented. In addition, Garrett County Democratic Central Committee shared with our Coalition that economic growth in "mountain" Maryland is hampered by the lack of state funding for drivers ed and limited access to public transportation. This severely affects job opportunities for the economically disadvantaged in the western part of the state.

Having a strong public transportation system is also key to Maryland's strategy to fight the climate crisis. Public transportation helps us achieve our goal to reduce per-capita Vehicle Miles Traveled 10% by 2030 and 20% by 2050. It also conserves natural resources and land by reducing the need for road construction, parking spaces, and harmful chemicals

To meet these targets and improve mobility for everyone, we should expand and invest in these programs, not scale them back due to current budget shortfalls.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

**HB 950\_TAM\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Duklewski

Position: FAV



**Bill:** House Bill 950: Maryland Transit Administration - Locally Operated Transit Systems - Mandatory Funding

**Position:** SUPPORT

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapape, and Members of the Committee:

I write on behalf of the Transportation Association of Maryland in support of House Bill 950, which would protect state funding for the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS).

In addition to federal grants and local funding, LOTS rely on state operating grants to fund both capital investment and operations. In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic funding for LOTS operating grants was cut by 20% (or \$12,000,000), which was the largest single area cut by MDOT. This cut was officially justified on the idea that it would be offset by the availability of CARES act emergency funding. This emergency funding was made available three years ago, and in many cases, it was exhausted in 2021. In December of 2023, once again LOTS were targeted for a 40% cut in state funding by MDOT.

Our members make mobility a reality for their customers. As ridership recovers from the pandemic they are being called upon to provide more responsive service to more people while also beginning the transition to low and zero emissions technology. As new challenges and new expectations arise, restoring state support is of the utmost importance.

Since 2019, costs have increased for truck and bus bodies by over 38%<sup>1</sup>. (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2023) Local jurisdictions have increased their contributions to pick up the slack, but there is a limit to local funding capability. Further cuts in state funding for local service would not only place strain on local jurisdictions but would jeopardize local transit's ability to provide local match for federal dollars.

Transit planning requires surety. While we have been promised a reprieve in this coming budget, there is no guarantee for future years that local transit will not again be regarded as a target for budget cuts. We emphasize that local transit support is not the cause of our state's trust fund woes. The state is sending less aid to local transit than it did 10 years ago, when over \$107 million was budgeted from the trust fund for statewide program operations.

**State ADA program** - Funding decreased by 17% in FY2016, remained flat for the next three years, and then decreased again by 9.4% in FY2020. Local contributions varied from year to year but remained consistently higher than the minimum required match.

**SSTAP** - Grant awards from have been flat statewide, and LOTS contribute considerably more local funds than the 25% minimum.

**Section 5307** –State operating funds for Section 5307 were cut by 20% in FY 21. The state share is consistently less than 25% of the total, with local match considerably higher than 25%.

**Section 5311** – State operating was cut by 20% in FY 21. Local funding far exceeds federal and State shares combined -ranging from 48.7% to 66.4% percent of the total.

The possibility of additional cuts to these services jeopardizes critical transit achievements across our state. This bill affects every transit jurisdiction in Maryland, and we are pleased that it commanded bipartisan support in the House. HB 950 does not request a single additional dollar of state funding that has not been spent in the past, and state funding for local transit has already been cut substantially over the past ten years Please protect this funding through supporting HB 950.

Sincerely,

John Duklewski  
Executive Director, Transportation Association of Maryland

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<sup>1</sup> (Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis, 2023)

**TAM HB 950 One Page Fact Sheet.pdf**

Uploaded by: John Duklewski

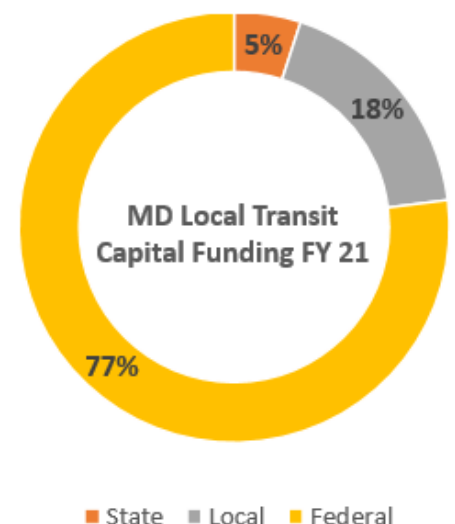
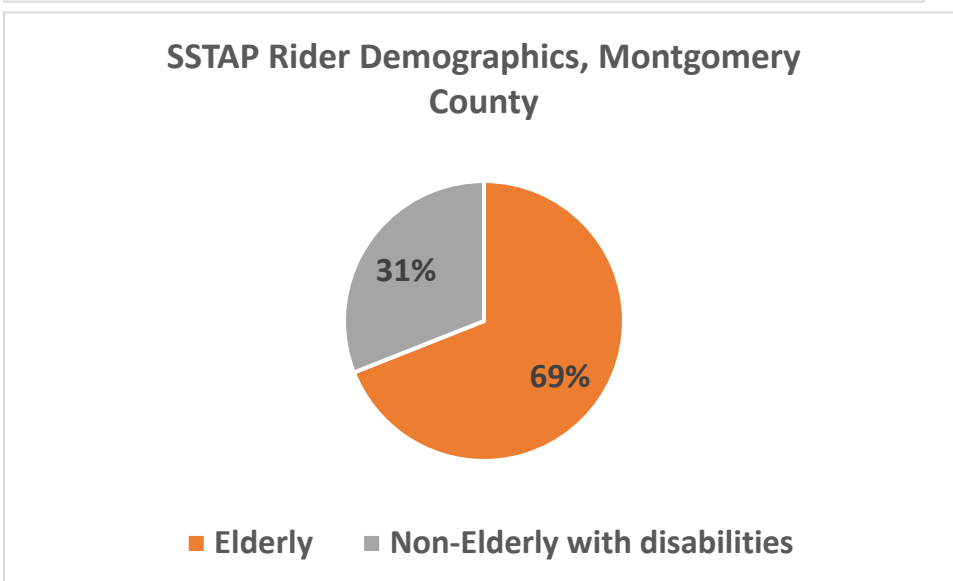
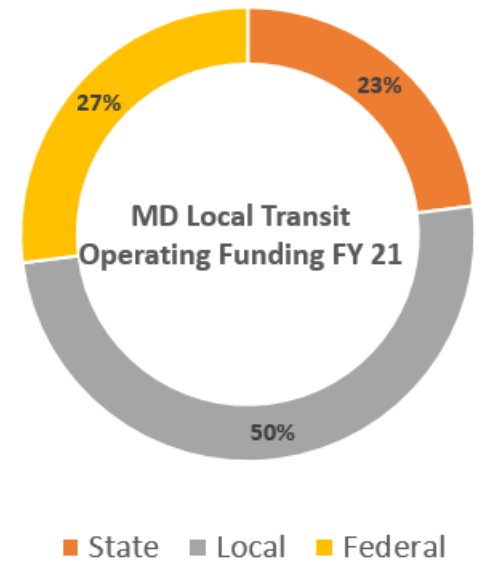
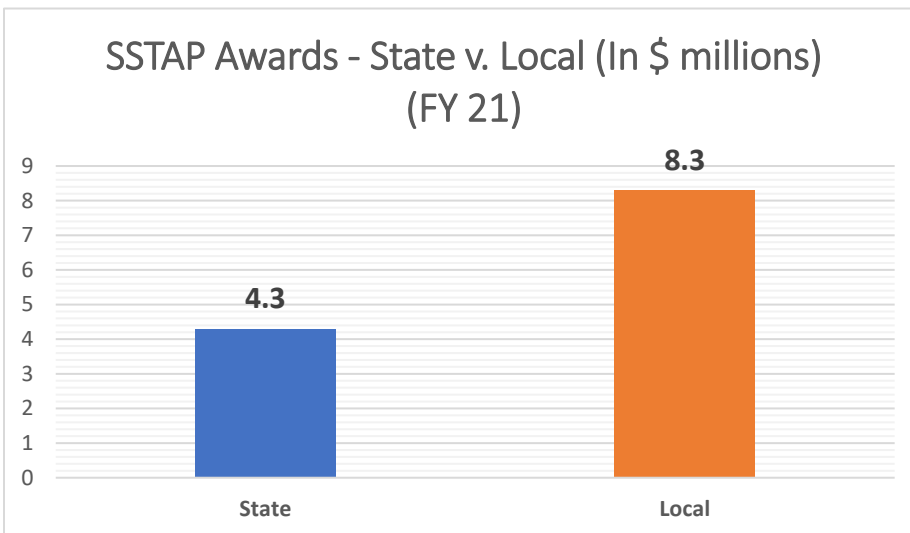
Position: FAV



The Transportation Association of Maryland Presents:

## How Local Transit is Funded

Compared to federal and local contributions, the state contributes the smallest amount to local transit budget, which includes Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program (SSTAP), ADA, Large Urban, and 5307 and 5311 formula funds. **Transportation Trust Fund appropriations for statewide program operations declined from \$107,150,702 in FY 15 to \$80,533,314 in FY 24**



**060 LOS HB 950 CSMC signed.pdf**

Uploaded by: Randy Guy

Position: FAV

ST. MARY'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT  
**COMMISSIONERS OF  
ST. MARY'S COUNTY**



James R. Guy, President  
Michael R. Alderson, Jr., Commissioner  
Eric S. Colvin, Commissioner  
Michael L. Hewitt, Commissioner  
Scott R. Ostrow, Commissioner

**House Bill 950**  
**Maryland Transit Administration – Locally Operated Transit Systems –**  
**Mandatory Funding**

**SUPPORT**

March 22, 2024

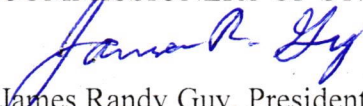
The Honorable Senator Guy Guzzone, Chairman  
Budget and Taxation Committee  
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chairman Guzzone:

The Commissioners of St. Mary's County **SUPPORT HB 950 - Maryland Transit Administration – Locally Operated Transit Systems – Mandatory Funding** which is being heard in the Budget and Taxation Committee.

We support HB 950 and request a favorable report. We appreciate the introduction of this legislation and believe it will benefit the citizens of St. Mary's County. We look forward to working with you on this and other initiatives throughout the session.

Sincerely,  
COMMISSIONERS OF ST. MARY'S COUNTY

  
James Randy Guy, President

CSMC/AB/sf  
T:/Consent/2024/060

Cc: Senator Jack Bailey  
Delegate Todd Morgan  
Delegate Matthew Morgan  
Delegate Brian Crosby  
Commissioner Mike Alderson, Jr.  
Commissioner Eric Colvin  
Commissioner Michael Hewitt  
Commissioner Scott R. Ostrow  
David Weiskopf, County Administrator  
John Sterling Houser, Deputy County Attorney



**2024-03-25 house bill 950 testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robert Shearman Jr

Position: FAV



# TOWN OF OCEAN CITY

*The White Marlin Capital of the World*

Monday, March 25, 2024

Maryland General Assembly  
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, Room 3-West  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Bill:	HB950 – Maryland Transit Administration – Locally Operated Transit Systems – Mandatory Funding
Position:	SUPPORT

Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and the Honorable Committee:

My name is Rob, and I’m the Transportation Manager for the Town of Ocean City, Maryland. I am writing to summarize and expand upon the remarks that I provided in support of HB950 to the House Appropriations Committee – because I feel they highlight a different, yet still vital, role of public transit.

Like Maryland’s other Locally Operated Transit Systems, Ocean City Transit provides mobility for a transit-dependent resident population and workforce. This is, of course, a vital service for many, connecting them with food, healthcare, and employment – and you will find testimony from my colleagues across the state detailing the negative impact that a funding cut surely would have on the lives of these sorts of riders. However, it would likely not come as a surprise for you to find that the vast majority of Ocean City’s 1.3 million annual passengers do not fall into this category. You would be correct to assume that most of the folks on our buses are beachgoers and Boardwalk visitors. But you would be *incorrect* to assume that the effect of reduced funding for our service would be nothing more than an inconvenience for vacationers. The effect could very well be a matter of life and death. *(And I understand that this sounds very dramatic – but, I ask that you please hear me out.)*

Ocean City Transit does more than give a lift to those who want to wade into the surf, or play a round of eighteen of mini-golf, or hit the arcades and amusement rides, or grab some Thrasher’s fries. The most important part of our mission is to provide a safe, convenient, affordable, and reliable alternative to driving while impaired. Those who come into town to relax, unwind, and enjoy a few adult beverages always have an inexpensive means to return safely to their lodging arrangements, without getting behind the wheel. There’s no reason even to contemplate doing so. Our bus stops line Coastal Highway along the complete length of the city in both directions, every 800 feet on average. And during the summer peak we have a bus passing by each stop every few minutes.

**MAYOR**  
Richard W. Meehan

**CITY COUNCIL**

Matthew M. James  
*President*

Anthony J. DeLuca  
*Secretary*

Peter S. Buas  
John F. Gehrig, Jr.  
J. Franklin Knight  
Carol Proctor  
Will Savage

**CITY MANAGER**  
Terence J. McGean, PE

**CITY CLERK**  
Diana L. Chavis, MMC

Of the state's ten thousand drunk driving arrests in 2023<sup>(1)</sup>, a mere 310 of them occurred in Ocean City<sup>(2)</sup>. And while collisions between motor vehicles and scooters, bicyclists, and pedestrians occur in modest numbers every year, we have been fortunate to report only four fatalities from such incidents over the last five calendar years. Even including the above, overall traffic fatalities in the city have averaged only two per year over the last five calendar years<sup>(2)</sup>. By and large, despite the festive atmosphere throughout the vacation season, Ocean City is a safe place to drive, bike, and walk.

We like to think that Ocean City Transit plays a massive role in that success. We do not have firm statistics on what percentage of our riders have had a few adult beverages before boarding – but anecdotally I'm sure our drivers will tell you that it's a significant proportion, particularly after the dinner hour. Our fear is that a reduction in funding, which would in turn cause a reduction in the frequency of service (and an increase in the incidence of buses already filled to capacity rolling by stops with passengers waiting to board), would result in an uptick of impaired vacationers making poor travel decisions. This clearly would put themselves, their passengers, other motorists, bicyclists, and pedestrians at risk of injury or fatality.

We ask that the Committee consider a favorable report on House Bill 950, guaranteeing sustained funding levels for Maryland's Locally Operated Transit Systems, including our operation in Ocean City. We like to say that Ocean City is "Somewhere to smile about" – and we hope you will do your part to help us keep it that way.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Shearman, Jr., CCTM  
Transportation Manager  
Town of Ocean City, Maryland

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(1) WTOP News, "Is this the year Noah Law's loophole closes? Activists push Maryland to prevent repeat drunk drivers," February 13<sup>th</sup>, 2024. Retrieved from <https://wtop.com/montgomery-county/2024/02/is-this-the-year-noah-laws-loophole-closes-activists-push-maryland-to-prevent-repeat-drunk-drivers/>

(2) Ocean City Police Department 2023 Annual Report, page 24. Retrieved from <https://oceancitymd.gov/oc/wp-content/uploads/2023-Annual-Report-FINAL.pdf>

# **HB 950 - Maryland Transit Administration - Locally**

Uploaded by: Sarah Peters

Position: FAV



March 22, 2024

**Bill: House Bill 950: Maryland Transit Administration- Locally Operated Transit Systems- Mandatory Funding**

**Position:** Support

Dear Chair, Vice-Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Gaithersburg, I am writing in support of HB 950, which mandates an annual appropriation of at least \$80,533,314 to the Locally Operated Transit System (LOTS) for statewide program operations beginning in fiscal 2026 and for each fiscal year thereafter.

The locally operated transit systems, which includes Ride On in Montgomery County, is crucial for our residents. By ensuring the stability of funding, we can improve the quality, reliability, and reach of public transportation services, thereby making communities like Gaithersburg more accessible.

The specified appropriation to the LOTS is not merely a financial commitment; it is a clear demonstration of our collective dedication to promoting sustainable transportation and reducing traffic congestion. Moreover, it supports economic development by improving access to employment, education, and essential services.

For these reasons, I urge you to support HB 950.

Should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at 301-466-5350 or our government relations consultant, Sarah Peters, at [speters@hbstrategies.us](mailto:speters@hbstrategies.us). We appreciate your support.

Sincerely,

Jud Ashman, Mayor  
City of Gaithersburg

City of Gaithersburg • 31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-2038  
301-258-6300 • FAX 301-948-6149 • [cityhall@gaithersburgmd.gov](mailto:cityhall@gaithersburgmd.gov) • [gaithersburgmd.gov](http://gaithersburgmd.gov)

MAYOR  
Jud Ashman

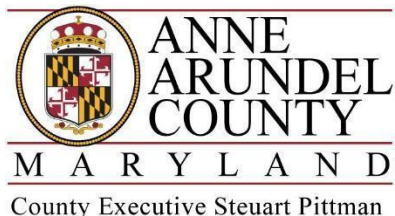
COUNCIL MEMBERS  
Neil Harris  
Lisa Henderson  
Yamil Hernández  
Jim McNulty  
Robert Wu

CITY MANAGER  
Tanisha R. Briley

**Anne Arundel County \_FAV\_HB950 (Senate).pdf**

Uploaded by: Steuart Pittman

Position: FAV



March 26, 2024

**House Bill 950**

**Maryland Transit Administration - Locally Operated Transit Systems -  
Mandatory Funding**

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Anne Arundel County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 950 – Maryland Transit Administration - Locally Operated Transit Systems - Mandatory Funding

House Bill 950 provides critical mandatory funding for locally operated transit systems across the state, which would benefit the millions of Marylanders who rely on transit for their daily commutes and provide for their families. In 2023, the General Assembly passed House Bill 1125, which codified the Locally Operated Transit System Grant Program within the Department of Transportation. This legislation expanded Maryland’s access to state and federal resources and provided an additional funding stream for local jurisdictions.

Anne Arundel County is the fourth largest county in the state, and transit plays a major role in how we address our local economy and economic growth. Effective routes give residents and out-of-county Marylanders access to county jobs, quality healthcare, and our robust tourism industry. Mandating an \$80 million appropriation in the annual budget allows the County to maintain fare free transit line operations such as the Gold Line Extension and Crofton Connector, and ensure these systems have the resources to progress in the future.

Marylanders deserve efficient transit systems that keep communities connected and provide economic opportunity. For all of these reasons, I respectfully request a **FAVORABLE** report on House Bill 950.

Steuart Pittman  
County Executive

**HB 950 - MoCo\_MCDOT\_FWA (Senate) (GA 24).pdf**

Uploaded by: Melanie Wenger

Position: FWA





# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8270

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**HB 950**

**DATE: March 26, 2024**

**SPONSOR: Delegate Edelson, et al.**

**ASSIGNED TO: Budget and Taxation**

**CONTACT PERSON: Melanie Wenger (melanie.wenger@montgomerycountymd.gov)**

**POSITION: Support with Amendment (Department of Transportation)**

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### **Maryland Transit Administration – Locally Operated Transit Systems – Mandatory Funding**

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation strongly supports House Bill 950, which would require the Governor to include in the annual budget an appropriation for the Locally Operating Transit System (LOTS) grant program from the Transportation Trust Fund of at least \$80,533,314 beginning in fiscal year 2026. This amount reflects the State funds originally appropriated to the program for fiscal year 2024, which was scheduled to be reduced by 80% for fiscal year 2025, before funds were identified to restore what would have been a devastating funding cut.

This bill builds off legislation that was enacted last year for the purpose of creating a more transparent and reliable system of supporting local transit across the State by: (1) codifying the LOTS program; and (2) and requiring an annual inflationary adjustment for funding provided by the LOTS program and the existing program for Ride On in Montgomery County and The Bus in Prince George's County. LOTS is now codified as a program in State law, which appropriately also identifies the revenue sources that fund the program. However, funding itself was left unaddressed.

The Department believes it is important to address the issue of funding reliability in the State statute since the County is highly dependent on the State subsidy provided for its Ride On bus system. Ride On is the second largest transit system in the State, behind MTA, and it is the second largest in the region, behind Metrobus|WMATA (Metrobus). Pre-COVID, Ride On operated 81 routes and served 20 million passengers a year. And, had the projected reduction in the County's Ride On subsidy come to pass, since that subsidy helps support Ride On's operating costs and not capital, the County would have had to immediately find \$18 million to backfill the cut to keep the system operating.

The County has always been thankful for the State support it has received, which was provided based on the rationale that Ride On and The Bus were less expensive alternatives to Metrobus, which would require full State funding support. This has proven to be the case: Ride On only

requires about 65% of the funding for the same service provided by Metrobus. Recent data show Ride On's operating cost per vehicle revenue hour is \$117 compared to \$193 for the operating cost per vehicle revenue hour for Metrobus. This isn't just a good State investment – it's a great one, especially considering that absent Ride On service, the State investment in Metrobus would require 100% financial support compared with the 33% subsidy required by Ride On.

Again, a "thank you" for passing last year's bill, but, after the turn of events this fall, now, it is more critical than ever to address the funding reliability issue. The Department urges the Committee to move favorably on House Bill 950, with an amendment to include an annual inflation adjustment to reflect the fundamental reality of constant rising costs and the value proposition locally operated transit offers the State.

# **HB850\_Letter of Information\_The Arc Maryland.pdf**

Uploaded by: Ande Kolp

Position: INFO



The Arc Maryland  
8601 Robert Fulton Drive  
Suite 140  
Columbia, MD 21046  
T 410.571.9320  
[www.thearcmd.org](http://www.thearcmd.org)

House Bill 950: Maryland Transit Administration - Locally Operated Transit Systems -  
Mandatory Funding

**Senate Budget and Taxation Committee**

**March 26, 2024**

**Position:** Letter of Information

The Arc Maryland is the largest statewide advocacy organization dedicated to protecting and advancing the rights and quality of life of people with intellectual and developmental disabilities.

We are providing this letter of information on House Bill 950, which would protect funding for Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) throughout our state

State support for local transit is critical to our system of transit for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities, to ensure quality, service, environmental protection, and equity. As state funding has decreased, our local and county matches for state and federal funding have taken on a greater proportion of funding responsibility. We may need greater financial support for our counties to ensure people with disabilities have access to the transportation they need.

We also ask that there be a long-term solution developed to provide future predictability in state funding streams in order for our LOTS to plan how to best serve the customers in our communities.

Please contact: Ande Kolp, Executive Director, The Arc Maryland 443-851-9351 [akolp@thearcmd.org](mailto:akolp@thearcmd.org)