



Bill: House Bill 28: Passenger, Truck, and Multipurpose Vehicles - Annual Registration Fees (Pedestrian Fatality Prevention Act of 2024)

Position: SUPPORT

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

I write on behalf of the Transportation Association of Maryland in support of House Bill 28, which serve as a major step forward in putting our state's transportation funding on a more solid basis.

Our members are the local transit systems that operate across our state, from Garrett County to Ocean City, with everything in between. Our members have not only been funded at a flat level for many years, but many of them have seen decreased funding over the past ten years, especially after the 20% COVID-19 budget cuts in state aid to local transit operating support.

The threatened funding cut to local transit support has only been temporarily averted, and during the continued lack of state investment our members' capital and operating expenses have only increased. While state spending on other areas of transportation have gone up, Locally Operated Transit Systems have seen increased costs without increased state investment. Local dollars have made up the gap, but there is a limit to local funding capability that state aid is essential to fill.

About 45 percent of Marylanders have no access to public transit. Black households are three times as likely as white households to have no access to a vehicle. When mobility is accessible only for some, there are negative consequences for all. Public transportation is the greener alternative. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, transportation makes up 29 percent of U.S. greenhouse gas emissions, and 41 percent of these emissions come from cars. Maryland should join other states in making a sustained and sustainable reinvestment in our local transit.

We fully support House Bill 28's efforts to increase support for the mobility of the citizens and communities we serve.

Sincerely,

John Duklewski
Executive Director, Transportation Association of Maryland