



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**March 6th, 2024**

**Testimony in Support of SB943  
Vehicle Laws - Bus Obstruction Monitoring Systems (Better Bus Service Act of 2024)**

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, Members of the Committee,

I am before you today to speak about SB943, The Better Bus Service Act of 2024, which is aimed at reducing obstructions to safe, efficient, and accessible bus transit service. The bill will implement provisions into Maryland's statute to improve public transportation and safety for all Marylanders. SB943 prohibits people from stopping, standing, or parking a vehicle in certain areas of the roadway and provides guidelines on how to enforce these rules.

The Better Bus Service Act is enabling legislation that allows transit agencies operating in Maryland to deploy fixed and bus-mounted cameras to enforce parking violations that interfere in transit operations. These violations include illegal parking at bus stops and in bus lanes or operating in a bus-only lane. The cameras will collect and review this footage, which will be reviewed by a parking enforcement officer who can issue a citation by mail. In order to protect privacy, the bill requires that all video evidence is destroyed when no longer relevant to the active citation, and the monitoring system cannot use facial recognition for biometric technology.

Similar jurisdictions have authorized this type of enforcement. In Washington D.C, WMATA uses bus mounted systems to enforce violations for illegal parking in bus lanes, but this enforcement stops at the Maryland Border. New York State passed similar legislation in 2019, and since then, bus time performance and reliability has increased, collisions have gone down on some routes by 34%, and the level of ticketing has been reduced ([New York MTA](#)). Additionally, blocked bus stops present serious hazards for people with disabilities and seniors, as illegal parking makes boarding buses dangerous or impossible.

Lastly, the bill enacts a Workgroup on Curb Space Management with members appointed by the Governor to analyze curb space regulations, provide recommendations on how to effectively manage curb space, examine strategies on obstruction enforcement at bus stops, provide recommendations for a public education campaign, and analyze potential privacy concerns.

People rely on buses to get to work, school, and more and over 100,000 trips are taken each day on the Maryland Transit Administration's bus network. The Better Bus Service Act of 2024 helps ensure that Marylanders get where they are going reliably, in a timely manner, and safely.

Today, you will hear from our sponsor panel, including Dan Katz from Hayden AI who is an industry expert, Charlie Scott with WMATA, Ronza Othman, President of the National Federation of the Blind MD Chapter, and Bob Carlson, disability advocate and formerly of the Community Transportation Association of America.

I thank you for your consideration and urge a favorable report on SB943.