



Senate Bill 785

Public Nuisance - Common Carriers - Damage to Public Infrastructure

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Judicial Proceedings Committee

Date: February 20, 2024

From: Dominic J. Butchko

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** SB 785. This bill enables counties to seek recourse against certain private transportation companies should they continuously damage public infrastructure.

Local governments in Maryland own and maintain roughly 5 of every 6 road miles across the state. Counties maintain the bulk of this public infrastructure, whether it be in urban areas found within the greater Baltimore-Washington region, or in the rural sections of Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore. When common carriers, such as private bus or other transit companies, operate in a way that continuously damages this infrastructure, it is largely counties who are forced to pay for repairs. This not only presents a significant unplanned fiscal burden, but it also proves problematic for residents forced to contend with avoidable congestion due to emergency maintenance measures. By giving counties additional tools to encourage common carriers to operate in less destructive ways, the General Assembly would be implementing a low-cost policy which will save already stretched transportation dollars.

As the primary entities responsible for road maintenance in Maryland, counties support any commonsense measure aimed at enabling smoother operations while putting less pressure on public resources. For this reason, MACo urges the Committee to give SB 785 a **FAVORABLE** report.