



Transportation Alliance

March 6, 2024

Testimony on SB 943 – *Better Bus Service Act of 2024* – Judicial Proceedings Committee

Position: Favorable

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance supports SB 943, which expands the ability of local jurisdictions to enforce dedicated bus lanes.

Dedicated bus lanes can be an effective tool to move people more efficiently through our most crowded and economically productive corridors. Public education and enforcement are critical to the effectiveness of dedicated bus lanes. But bus riders regularly report that lanes are blocked by parked or standing cars and trucks.

At the Transportation Alliance we recruited volunteers and conducted observations of Baltimore City bus lanes in fall 2018. During our observations 25% of the time a car or truck was parked in any given block of a bus lane. Buses are forced to merge into general travel lanes, causing delays and disrupting schedules. These disruptions can impact the entire network and on-time performance suffers. MTA's buses, for example, are typically reporting an on-time performance rate of under 75%.

However, better and consistent enforcement should reduce incidents of cars or trucks stopped or standing in bus lanes, lower travel times for bus trips, improve reliability for scheduled bus arrivals, and move more people per hour through our busiest corridors. A study from New York City shows camera enforcement on bus lanes increased bus speeds by up to 34% and increased ridership by up to 20%.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for Senate Bill 943.