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Patrick Moran – President

**HB 1144 – State Public Transit Service and Stations –
Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury
Finance Committee
March 27, 2025**

Position: FAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 represents 50,000 state, county, and municipal employees, including police officers serving with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). Many of our members are also regular MTA riders, relying on the system daily to commute to work. We strongly support HB 1144. This bill mandates that the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) establish a policy that bans or excludes individuals from MTA services who commit assaults against passengers or transit workers, either on or near transit vehicles. This is important legislation to help keep transit workers and riders safe, especially at a time when assaults on transit workers are increasing.

HB 1144 provides a reasonable and effective approach to enforcing MTA policies, ensuring a safe transit environment for all riders. When passengers violate rules designed to protect everyone, there must be clear and consistent consequences. The bill stipulates that a first offense results in a 30-day ban, a second offense leads to a 180-day ban, and a third offense results in a lifetime ban. This approach mirrors similar legislation passed in states like Virginia, Illinois, New Jersey, Oregon, California, and Massachusetts. While it is essential to maintain accessible public transit for all, this should not extend to allowing passengers to engage in assaultive behavior without facing accountability.

We urge the committee to provide a favorable report on HB 1144. Thank you.

The following states that have collective bargaining for state employees, AK, CA, CT, DC, DE, HI, IL, ME, MN, NE, NJ, NM, NV, OH, OR, PA, MT, RI, WA have a terminal point for negotiations, either binding interest arbitration, the right to strike, or a legislative process. These processes create a level playing field for both parties.

This legislation would create a mutual incentive to compel parties to reach an agreement around collective bargaining negotiations by instilling a binding interest arbitration process, whereby if the two sides cannot come to agreement through negotiations by a specified deadline the proposals.

From the two sides would be presented to a professional, neutral third- party arbitrator – hearing from witnesses and experts, with data and evidence – for consideration of all the facts involved with the purpose of determining which proposal is most appropriate to implement. The choice by the arbitrator would then be considered a binding resolution to be implemented by the Governor and exclusive bargaining representative for whatever appropriations are necessary to implement and fund the memorandum of understanding. The budgetary powers of the Maryland General Assembly remain unaltered.

SB 188 is a strong and positive step toward enhancing fairness, balance, and efficiency, and resolution. It follows a model that is well-established in other states and among Maryland counties. We urge a favorable report.

