

March 27, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Letter of Support – House Bill 527 – Maryland Transit Administration – Purple Line – Free Ridership and Promotional Materials and Services

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports House Bill 527 as amended and offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

As amended, House Bill 527 requires the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to develop and implement a program to provide free ridership on the Purple Line to individuals residing near the corridor¹ for the first month after transit service commences. Additionally, the bill requires MTA to use its in-house resources, including the Purple Line website, MTA website, print shop and design services, and other applicable resources to support advertising for businesses located near the corridor.

MTA appreciates the sponsor's willingness to work on amendments to the bill in the House of Delegates. The amendment to the ridership provision balances recognition of the community with the need to develop an expectation of fare service.² Concerning the advertising provisions of the bill, as amended – MTA will work closely with businesses along the corridor to offer opportunities for highlights on the Purple Line and MTA websites, as well as flyers or other applicable materials. This effort will begin this year and continue through the initial three months after the Purple Line is operational. MDOT remains committed to supporting local businesses during construction to ensure that businesses can remain open and thrive once Purple Line service begins.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information and issue House Bill 527 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

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¹ Specifically, the provisions in the bill apply to individuals and businesses within a one quarter-mile radius of the Purple Line track.

² During the COVID-19 pandemic, many transit services went fare free to entice individuals to utilize transit. Ultimately, the industry discovered that it was harder to transition back to a fare-for-service model the longer free service is offered.