

Chapter 646

(House Bill 1199)

AN ACT concerning

Transportation – MobilityLink Paratransit Service Improvements – Study

FOR the purpose of requiring the Maryland Transportation Institute at the University of Maryland to conduct a study to identify methods to improve the Maryland Transit Administration’s ADA MobilityLink paratransit service; ~~requiring the Maryland Department of Transportation to incorporate the findings and recommendations of the study conducted under this Act into a certain transportation plan;~~ and generally relating to the study to identify methods to improve the Administration’s ADA MobilityLink paratransit service.

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,

That:

(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.

(2) “ADA” means the federal Americans with Disabilities Act.

(3) “Administration” means the Maryland Transit Administration.

(b) The Maryland Transportation Institute at the University of Maryland shall conduct a study to identify methods to improve the Maryland Transit Administration’s ADA MobilityLink paratransit service.

(c) The study shall:

(1) summarize and compare the Administration’s MobilityLink service to similar entities nationwide that provide ADA paratransit services;

(2) identify the service structure of ADA paratransit services in other service areas nationwide and whether a public entity, private contractor, or hybrid model is used to provide the service, including consideration of how the following services are provided:

(i) fleet ownership;

(ii) fleet maintenance;

(iii) dispatch;

(iv) reservations;

- (v) scheduling;
- (vi) operators;
- (vii) mechanics;
- (viii) customer service;
- (ix) quality assurance and control; and
- (x) any other relevant aspects as the Maryland Transportation

Institute deems necessary;

(3) analyze both the short- and long-term fiscal costs and savings associated with each type of ADA paratransit service model, including a comparison of the quality of service and reliability of each service model;

(4) analyze the performance metrics associated with the ADA paratransit services in various service areas nationwide based on the Federal Transit Administration's ADA Guidance for metrics, including:

- (i) on-time performance for pick-ups and drop-offs;
- (ii) missed trips;
- (iii) onboard transit times;
- (iv) excessive trip lengths;
- (v) call center hold times and performance;
- (vi) rate of customer complaints and resolution; and
- (vii) safety conditions and practices on paratransit vehicles;

(5) analyze the workforce metrics among the ADA paratransit services in various service areas nationwide, including:

- (i) turnover rate;
- (ii) average length of employment;
- (iii) absenteeism rate;
- (iv) accidents and preventable accident rates;

- (v) workplace injury rates;
- (vi) workers' compensation claims rates;
- (vii) career training opportunities;
- (viii) career advancement opportunities;
- (ix) average wages and benefits;
- (x) morale and satisfaction; and
- (xi) any other relevant aspects as the Maryland Transportation Institute deems necessary;

(6) in consultation with the Maryland Commission on Disabilities and the State Coordinating Committee for Human Services Transportation, solicit input and comments from the public and riders of the Administration's MobilityLink paratransit service; ~~and~~

(7) develop recommendations for service improvements to the Administration's MobilityLink paratransit service, considering long-term costs and benefits alongside a qualitative analysis to enhance the delivery of high-quality service to MobilityLink riders;

(8) develop recommendations for service improvements to individuals in areas outside of three-quarters of a mile of a fixed transportation route; and

(9) develop recommendations to address interjurisdictional restrictions to paratransit services, including restrictions relating to medical appointments that cross jurisdictional lines.

(d) The Governor may include in the fiscal year 2026 budget bill an appropriation of at least \$150,000 for the purpose of carrying out the study required under subsection (b) of this section.

(e) On or before July 1, 2025, the Maryland Transportation Institute shall submit a report on its findings and recommendations to:

- (1) the Governor;
- (2) in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article:
 - (i) the General Assembly;

(ii) the members of the Anne Arundel County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly;

(iii) the members of the Baltimore County Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly; and

(iv) the members of the Baltimore City Delegation to the Maryland General Assembly;

(3) the County Executive and County Council of Anne Arundel County;

(4) the County Executive and County Council of Baltimore County; ~~and~~

(5) the Maryland Department of Transportation; and

~~(5)~~ (6) the Mayor and City Council of Baltimore City.

~~SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the Maryland Department of Transportation shall incorporate the findings and recommendations of the study conducted under Section 1 of this Act into the 2050 Maryland Transportation Plan.~~

SECTION ~~2.~~ 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2024. It shall remain effective for a period of ~~1 year and 6 months~~ 2 years and, at the end of ~~December 31, 2025~~ June 30, 2026, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.

Approved by the Governor, May 9, 2024.