

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Joint Resolution 16 (Senator Lawlah)

Finance

Commerce and Government Matters

Transportation - Woodrow Wilson Bridge - Proposed New Metrorail Line

This joint resolution urges the Governor to direct the Secretary of the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to continue its study of the Metrorail Purple Line and to construct and fund the Purple Line segments from New Carrollton to Bethesda and from Branch Avenue to Alexandria. The resolution also urges the Governor to work closely with the Mayor of the District of Columbia and the Governor of Virginia and all appropriate federal, state, and local officials to coordinate planning and gain regional support for these projects.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Compliance with this joint resolution would result in a \$20 million expenditure for preliminary engineering and environmental documentation for the segment proposed under the resolution. Construction of both segments would cost at least \$2.6 billion. It is unclear how much federal funds would be available to finance the study or construction.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: None applicable.

Background: The proposed 14-mile Purple Line extension of the Metrorail system would allow passengers to travel between New Carrollton and Bethesda metro stations; the line would run through College Park and Silver Spring. The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) estimates that the line would cost \$1.2 billion or \$85 million per mile and would accommodate 71,200 daily riders.

The General Assembly approved, as part of the Consolidated Transportation Program, an \$18.9 million study of the new Purple Line. The six-year study, to be conducted by the Mass Transit Administration, incorporates an \$8.3 million evaluation of the Georgetown Branch Transitway, a proposed 4.4-mile light rail line between the Bethesda and Silver Spring metrorail stations. Planners anticipate that the transitway will cost \$236 million to \$258 million and be used by 19,500 daily riders. The fiscal 2003 allowance for the combined study is \$4.2 million; federal funds will finance most of the study.

Another extension has also been proposed to run from Suitland/Branch Avenue (across the Woodrow Wilson Bridge) to the City of Alexandria in Virginia. It would cost an estimated \$1.4 billion (in 1999 dollars) to construct. While federal formula money can provide 80% of the funds needed for such a project, none is currently available.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: HJ 23 (Delegate Patterson, *et al.*) – Commerce and Government Matters.

Information Source(s): Department of Legislative Services

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