

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2006 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE

House Bill 1402 (Delegate Rosenberg, *et al.*)
 Environmental Matters

Maryland Transit Administration - Greater Baltimore Bus Initiative - Required Public Hearings

This emergency bill requires the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to hold an additional three public meetings prior to implementing the second phase of the Greater Baltimore Bus Initiative (GBBI). The three meetings must be held on three different dates in three different locations directly affected by the second phase.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures could increase by \$23,800 in FY 2007 only to advertise and hold three public hearings. Revenues would not be affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2007	FY 2008	FY 2009	FY 2010	FY 2011
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	23,800	0	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$23,800)	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note:() = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate effect

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: MTA has authority to plan, develop, construct, acquire, finance, and operate transit facilities. In addition, MTA has jurisdiction over services performed by transit facilities owned or controlled by MTA, including bus service. Until a public

hearing is held, MTA cannot establish or abandon any route. Any person served by or using the transit facilities may request a public hearing on any service rendered by the transit facilities owned or controlled by MTA, as can the People's Counsel to the Public Service Commission, and any private carrier operating in the district.

Background: The GBBI is the first major overhaul of bus routes in Baltimore in over 30 years. Four new bus routes are being introduced, but 18 are being eliminated, and others are being restructured to take their place. Additional buses will be added to more heavily traveled lines, while other lines will be cut back. Only 7 routes out of 59 will be entirely unaffected by the GBBI. The second phase of the GBBI will take effect on June 11, 2006.

The GBBI has been extremely controversial. The altering of routes has increased the distance that some people have to travel to reach a bus stop. The elimination and service reductions of some lines has made it difficult for individuals who do not own a car to reach jobs and school. Charges have been made that the changes have a disproportionate impact on individuals who are poor and members of ethnic minorities.

Unlike the previous phase of GBBI, MTA does not intend to hold public meetings on the second phase of the GBBI. MTA held six public hearings on the first phase of the GBBI. In addition, due to complaints about service since the first phase was initiated, changes have been made that went into effect February 5, 2006.

State Expenditures: MTA advises that it would likely hold the required meetings in early fiscal 2007 rather than in the remaining months of fiscal 2006. Assuming that MTA must delay the implementation of the second phase of the GBBI until fiscal 2007, TTF expenditures would increase by \$23,750 in fiscal 2007. This estimate is based on the following expenses:

- \$12,500 for advertising all three meetings; and
- additional costs of \$11,250 for all three meetings (\$3,750 per meeting).

Additional costs include, but are not limited to, location rental, sign language and foreign language interpreters, transcription services, and audio-visual rental fees.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 580 (Senators Gladden and Jones) – Finance.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation, Baltimore City,
Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 16, 2006
ncs/ljm

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