

Department of Legislative Services  
Maryland General Assembly  
2019 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE  
First Reader

House Bill 1126 (Delegate Glenn)  
Environment and Transportation

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Maryland Transit Administration - MobilityLink - Free Rides for Elected  
Officials

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This bill requires the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to allow State and local elected officials to use its MobilityLink service free of charge.

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Fiscal Summary

**State Effect:** Because the bill does not require MTA to establish a special service for elected officials, and because the total number of State and local elected officials expected to use the service in any given year is anticipated to be negligible, the bill is not anticipated to materially affect MTA's operations or finances.

**Local Effect:** The bill does not materially affect local governmental operations or finances.

**Small Business Effect:** None.

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Analysis

**Bill Summary:** "MobilityLink" means a specialized transit service available to individuals who, because of a disability, are functionally unable to get to a bus stop, wait unassisted at a bus stop or train station, or board or ride a bus or train without assistance.

**Current Law/Background:**

*Maryland Transit Administration – MobilityLink*

MTA operates a comprehensive transit system throughout the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, including more than 50 local bus lines in Baltimore and other services

such as the light rail, Baltimore Metro subway, commuter buses, Maryland Area Regional Commuter (also known as MARC) trains, and mobility/paratransit vehicles. MTA is also responsible for hundreds of transit stations.

MTA's [MobilityLink service](#) is a specialized transit service available to people who, because of a disability, are functionally unable to get to a bus stop, wait unassisted at a stop or station, or board or ride a bus or train by themselves. It is a shared ride service offered from the first exterior door of a person's home or pick up location to the first exterior door of the person's destination. To qualify for MobilityLink, an applicant must have an impairment that substantially limits his/her ability to independently access, board, or ride other MTA services. The one-way fare is \$2.00 for eligible riders and their guests.

MTA advises that in fiscal 2018, MobilityLink collected approximately \$2.1 million in revenues and paid the vendors who provided the service approximately \$2.0 million.

*Transit Ridership as a Fringe Benefit for Executive Branch Employees*

Currently, employees of the Executive Branch of State government, among others, may ride on MTA local service (Baltimore area bus, Metro subway, and light rail) at no cost. State employees who otherwise qualify for MTA's MobilityLink service may use that service at no cost as well. This fringe benefit, which is not authorized in statute, was established by the Executive Branch approximately 18 years ago.

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### **Additional Information**

**Prior Introductions:** None.

**Cross File:** None.

**Information Source(s):** Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Association of Counties; Maryland Municipal League; Department of Budget and Management; Maryland Department of Disabilities; Department of Legislative Services

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