HOUSE BILL 1336

By: Delegate Bridges
Introduced and read first time: February 11, 2022
Assigned to: Appropriations and Environment and Transportation

A BILL ENTITLED

AN ACT concerning

Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission

FOR the purpose of establishing the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission to study and make findings and recommendations relating to the funding, governance, and performance of mass transit in the greater Baltimore region; and generally relating to the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission and mass transit.

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

That:

(a) In this section, “Commission” means the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission.

(b) There is a Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission.

(c) (1) The Commission consists of the following members:

(i) One member of the Senate of Maryland, appointed by the President of the Senate;

(ii) One member of the House of Delegates, appointed by the Speaker of the House;

(iii) One individual who is an expert in mass transit issues in the greater Baltimore region, appointed by the Governor; and

(iv) Three individuals from Baltimore City, two individuals from Baltimore County, and one individual from Anne Arundel County, each of whom shall:

EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.
[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.
1. Be appointed by the mayor or county executive of their respective jurisdiction; and

2. Have one or more of the following qualifications:

   A. Residence in a community impacted by the lack of mass transit options or funding;

   B. Expertise in mass transit issues in the greater Baltimore region;

   C. Representation of a local nonprofit or advocacy group specializing in transportation issues;

   D. Representation of an academic institution in the State; or

   E. Representation of a historically underserved community with respect to mass transit options or funding.

(2) To the extent practicable, the membership of the Commission shall reflect the racial, gender, ethnic, and geographic diversity of the State, according to the most recent available census data.

(d) The President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House shall jointly designate the chair of the Commission.

(e) The Department of Legislative Services and the Baltimore Metropolitan Council shall provide staff for the Commission.

(f) (1) The Commission shall meet at least four times per calendar year.

   (2) A majority of members of the Commission shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of business.

   (3) A member of the Commission:

      (i) May not receive compensation as a member of the Commission; but

      (ii) Is entitled to reimbursement for expenses under the Standard State Travel Regulations, as provided in the State budget.

(4) All Commission members shall continue to serve until the reporting required in subsection (h) of this section is complete and submitted to the General Assembly and the Governor.

(g) The Commission shall:
(1) Review the findings of the Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study published by the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board in August of 2021;

(2) Make recommendations to the General Assembly and the Governor regarding changes to the funding and governance of transit in the greater Baltimore region;

(3) Study, analyze, and recommend alternative governance and funding models for the Baltimore area transit system to the current State–led model; and

(4) Perform the following tasks:

(i) Identify potential approaches that:

1. Equitably distribute governance and funding responsibilities in mass transit; and

2. Improve performance, accountability, and ridership on Baltimore’s transit system;

(ii) Review the Maryland Department of Transportation’s projected capital needs for comparison with the repair and service needs of the greater Baltimore public transit system;

(iii) Study examples from peer regions of successful structures for shared public transportation funding and oversight;

(iv) Review potential alternative distributions of responsibilities for public transportation planning, oversight, and funding among State and local governments to improve the planning and delivery of public transportation in the greater Baltimore region;

(v) Review potential alternative entities or governance structures for regional mass transit that include:

1. The study of whether a new regional transportation entity could be created or existing entities could be given new responsibilities; and

2. Exploration of the general powers, duties, funding, financing, and budget authority of any potential entity;

(vi) Locate potential State, local, or regional funding sources for public transportation;

(vii) Coordinate with State, local, and other providers of public and private transit in the region; and
(viii) Complete any additional steps needed to improve coordination among public transportation services in the region.

(h) (1) On or before December 1, 2022, the Commission shall submit an interim report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

(2) On or before December 1, 2023, the Commission shall submit a final report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2–1257 of the State Government Article, the General Assembly.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect June 1, 2022. It shall remain effective for a period of 1 year and 7 months and, at the end of December 31, 2023, this Act, with no further action required by the General Assembly, shall be abrogated and of no further force and effect.