

May 27, 2022

The Honorable Adrienne A. Jones  
Speaker of the House of Delegates  
H-101 State House  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Madam Speaker:

In accordance with Article II, Section 17 of the Maryland Constitution, I have vetoed House Bill 632 – *Baltimore East–West Corridor – Transit Study – Requirements*.

House Bill 632 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) to take all of the steps necessary to secure an expeditious Record of Decision on the Red Line project. As you know, the MDOT MTA is already engaged in a study of this exact corridor via the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan (CMTRP). To accomplish this, the MDOT MTA has already programmed approximately \$12 million in State funding for the current CMRTP East–West Corridor project, which will fund the feasibility study, alternatives analysis phase, and portions of the pre–NEPA and preliminary design phases. Completing a nearly identical study in the same area would be duplicative of the work the MDOT MTA is already conducting and would be an unproductive use of state funds. Furthermore, the MDOT MTA needs the flexibility to study the range of alternatives in NEPA that the Federal Transit Administration may require, and to select an alternative based on the data generated during the NEPA review.

House Bill 632 also mandates that the MDOT MTA undertake similar preliminary efforts to secure a Record of Decision for a MARC station at the Hopkins Bayview Campus. Any station that would be on the Bayview campus would be located in an active Norfolk Southern rail yard and would therefore need to be approved by Norfolk Southern. A Bayview MARC station would also need to be incorporated into Amtrak’s Northeast Corridor planning and approved by Amtrak to be viable. Negotiations with the host railroads will very likely yield a different outcome than the one envisioned by the legislation. Without the approval of the host railroads, it will be near impossible to successfully complete a Bayview station.

I am supportive of the intent of this legislation to improve transit, as demonstrated by my record–level investment in transit to date, but it must be done in a fiscally responsible manner and in one that does not limit our ability to adapt to evolving conditions. It has never been clearer that funding mandates lead to bureaucratic paralysis and jeopardize the ability of an agency to effectively protect and serve the public. The MDOT needs to focus on maintaining the integrity of the State’s transit system, roads, bridges, port, airports, and motor vehicles services, rather than

spending state funds on a study that is duplicative and ultimately unnecessary just to fulfill political imperatives.

For these reasons, I have vetoed House Bill 632.

Sincerely,

Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.  
Governor