



Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

EMPOWERMENT • OPPORTUNITY • INCLUSION

Appropriations Committee

HB368: Maryland Transit Administration - Funding (Transit Safety and Investment Act)

February 4, 2020

Position: Support

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) is an independent, public policy organization that works to improve policies, programs and services that support people with developmental disabilities and their families in our communities. The DD Council is led by people with developmental disabilities and their families. From that perspective, the DD Council supports HB 368 which requires additional funds for the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) based on MTA's assessment of unfunded capital needs.

WHY is this legislation important?

- **Transportation provides a vital lifeline for people with disabilities to access employment, education, healthcare, and community life.**
- **Yet, one of the most cited barriers for people with developmental disabilities in achieving full participation in community life is the availability, accessibility, and reliability of transportation.**

WHAT does this legislation do?

- Extends the *Maryland Metro/Transit Funding Act* by five years. That act requires increased operating and capital spending for the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). For fiscal year 2023 through 2027, the appropriation for MTA's operating expenses may not be less than the fiscal 2022 appropriation.
- For fiscal 2022 through 2027, the Governor must include in the State budget an appropriation from the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) of at least \$500 million for MTA's capital needs. The bill takes effect June 1, 2020.

Many people with disabilities rely on public transportation provided by the MTA to go grocery shopping, attend medical appointments, to socialize, and to spend time with family.

The additional funding required by HB 368 is essential so people with developmental disabilities maintain independence and meaningfully participate in all aspects of life.

Being able to move easily around our neighborhoods, cities, and towns is crucial to a high quality of life and supports smart growth for our economy. This legislation facilitates employment for all Marylander's, including people with developmental disabilities, and as a result, increases the visibility of people with developmental disabilities in the workforce.

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