

BROOKE E. LIERMAN
Legislative District 46
Baltimore City

Environment and Transportation
Committee

Chair

Land Use and Ethics Subcommittee

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review

Joint Committee on Ending
Homelessness

Joint Committee on Pensions



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 311
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3319 · 301-858-3319
800-492-7122 Ext. 3319
Brooke.Lierman@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of HB 368; Transit Safety and Investment Act
Testimony of Delegate Brooke Lierman
February 4, 2020 * Appropriations Committee

What this bill does

The Transit Safety and Investment Act will prevent the Maryland Transit Administration from falling off an impending funding cliff by requiring additional funding for MTA's capital needs for the next 6 years. MDOT-MTA released its first ever Capital Needs Inventory last July, revealing that MTA is \$2bn short of what MDOT believes it needs to maintain a state of good repair, and keep up with new safety and environmental compliance needs, over the next decade. This bill will provide an average annual increase of \$123 million for MTA capital needs for the next six years.

The legislation will provide funding for MTA's backlog of state of good repair needs, such as maintaining light rail and subway tracks, MARC safety and security systems, as well as bus and bus shelter maintenance. It will also provide funding for electronic enhancements, routine updates to software, positive train control, and needed upgrades that will allow MTA to comply with Clean Water Act requirements. Further, it would allow MTA to improve access to MARC and bus stations, bus shelter examination, EV charging stations, and solar rooftops at bus depots.

Why this bill matters

MTA operates local buses, commuter buses, light rail, MARC, and paratransit, and provides funding to locally operated transit systems in every Maryland county, Baltimore City, Annapolis, and Ocean City. MTA provides more than 300,000 rides on the average workday.

Because the MTA system is not working properly, thousands of Marylanders who rely on public transit around the state - and employers - face additional barriers to success. For example, in 2018, the Baltimore Metro Subway, which 40,000 people rely on daily, was shut down for a month for emergency track repairs because the tracks were too worn to operate safely. The light rail had similar emergency shutdowns in 2019 from heavy rain, erosion and a sinkhole. MTA buses are unreliable and break down twice as often as other major Northeast cities. Only 60% to 70% of buses arrive on time - meaning that employers cannot rely on their employee base that uses transit. These

issues end up making Marylanders late to work, health appointments, school and other obligations. This disproportionately impacts communities of color, persons with disabilities, and low-income communities who have less access to transportation to reach their critical destinations each day.

The transportation sector is the also the biggest contributor to climate pollution in the state, and reliable and connected transit is necessary to reduce climate congestion and pollution by providing riders an alternative to single-occupancy-vehicles. Governor Hogan's Greenhouse Gas Reduction Act plan, released in 2019, relies on additional funding to meet its goals for reducing greenhouse gases. Reliable transit is essential for connecting Marylanders to employment opportunities and investing in the sustainability of our state.

Why should you vote for this bill

Your constituents and mine - transit riders and drivers alike - need Maryland to have a fully functioning transit system: it reduces greenhouse gasses, it supports our state economy, allows businesses to grow, and ensures that Marylanders have the means to live, work, and thrive around the state. It is our responsibility as lawmakers to ensure we maintain a safe and efficient transit system for this generation and those to come. It's time to act to fund transit in Maryland.

TRANSIT SAFETY AND INVESTMENT ACT

HB 368 (Lierman); SB 424 (Zucker)

AVERTING MTA'S FUNDING CLIFF SO MARYLANDERS CAN SAFELY AND RELIABLY GET TO WORK, SCHOOL, HEALTHCARE, AND ESSENTIAL DESTINATIONS

The Transit Safety and Investment Act will avert MTA's funding cliff by providing an average annual increase of \$123 million for MTA capital needs from FY2022-2027.

THE PROBLEM: NEGLECTING OUR INFRASTRUCTURE

The Capital Needs Inventory (CNI), released in July 2019 as required by the Maryland General Assembly, shows that MTA has a deferred maintenance backlog of \$1.5 billion for its State of Good Repair (SOGR) needs. 10-year SOGR needs total \$4.62 billion or \$462 million annually.

State of Good Repair Examples: MARC safety and security systems, bus shelter maintenance, buses, light rail and subway tracks, MARC switches, and more.

The CNI report also identified \$1.1 billion over 10 years in unfunded Enhancement Needs, which are compliance projects and other upgrades.

Enhancement Examples: Improving access to MARC and bus stations, bus shelter expansion, Clean Water Act compliance, security enhancements and green bus fleet.

MDOT's proposed FY 2020-2025 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), the 6-year planning budget, not only fails to provide new funds, it actually cuts \$300 million for MTA compared with the previous year's CTP (FY 2019-2024). If enacted, these cuts risk serious disruptions - like another emergency Metro shutdown and further MARC delays due to locomotive breakdowns, or worse.

THE COST OF DOING NOTHING

Service shutdowns and delays. Even later and less reliable buses and trains. Unsafe conditions for transit workers and riders. Delaying by years the ability to expand the system. More health and climate impacts from pollution.

THE SOLUTION

By providing an average of \$123 million in additional capital dollars annually for SOGR and Enhancement needs, the Transit Safety and Investment Act ensures that MTA has a total of \$500 million annually to avert MTA's funding cliff by meeting its most critical capital needs for MARC and Central Maryland transit (i.e., non Purple-Line).

\$462 million for SOGR + \$38 million for Enhancements = \$500 million in annual needs
MTA's average non-Purple Line funding level in the draft FY2020-2025 CTP for years affected by this legislation is \$377 million per year. \$500 million needed - \$377 million projected funding = Average of \$123 million additional capital dollars annually.