



TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE

HB 1367 Transportation – Western Maryland MARC Rail Extension - Study

POSITION: Support

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) supports HB 1367 that studies a MARC rail extension in Western Maryland. Our positions support alternative transportation modes that reduce energy consumption, protect natural resources and provide regional visions that reflect local concerns.

Here we have an opportunity to find out if more commuter rail service in a corridor will help to solve some of our problems with transportation congestion. Since this is a bipartisan bill that will include diverse localities and groups, it has the potential to find answers to some difficult questions.

We often hear about how Maryland is in competition with Virginia. LWVMD has paid attention to the expansion of commuter rail in Virginia involving new negotiations with CSX Rail, a feat that has been mentioned as being impossible. This study will help Maryland learn about how rail might be expanded and better incorporated into the fabric of many geographic areas that are currently clogged with road traffic. Finding an environmentally friendly solution to congestion benefits everyone.

Since HB 1367 will also study costs and has a near target date of completion, it has the potential to make an impact on the lives of many Maryland residents. LWVMD strongly urges you to vote favorably on this bill.