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The Honorable Kumar Barve and
Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee

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RE: SUPPORT HB-1367

As State Legislative Director for the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Worker's I am urging your committee to **support HB1367** "*Transportation - Western Maryland MARC Rail Extension - Study*" with an amendment.

Our organization represents railroad workers who are employed by CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern Railroad, Canton Railroad and in MARC and Amtrak commuter services.

HB-1367 would require a study to be performed under the guidance of the Department of Transportation on extending Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) commuter rail service to western Maryland.

Our union has long championed commuter rail investment. We know from data that improving and expanding commuter rail pays big dividends – it boosts jobs and housing, generates increased tax revenues, spurs new businesses, and reduces our addiction to single occupancy vehicles thus improving our congestion and pollution.

MARC is critical to the State of Maryland:

- It provides 35,000 trips every day delivering essential transportation options to the people of this state.
- It is critical to Maryland's economic growth and supports good middle-class jobs including operating employees who are members of SMART-TD.
- Improved and expanded MARC service will lead to increased job creation as new businesses locate here to take advantage of superior transportation options for employees and customers.
- During a time of suffocating traffic on our roads, MARC gives the people of this state and region a chance to travel to jobs and other important destinations without the time and financial losses associated with severe gridlock.

Every day western Marylanders wake up in one jurisdiction but work in another. Currently, there are very limited options for their commute to other jurisdictions. They should have as an option a commuter rail system that offers transportation between jurisdictions.

If implemented, this service would fuel commuter rail job creation as more skilled railroad employees will be needed as service expands and integrates western Maryland with jurisdictions along the route and into the District of Columbia.

We are committed to seeing this through to fruition. It is an important necessary step we must take if we're serious about reducing emissions while improving the quality of life for those having to commute daily for employment and other personal reasons.

Our members work on the MARC trains that currently operate between the District of Columbia and as far west as Frederick, Maryland and Martinsburg, West Virginia. They interact with commuters daily and hear firsthand of any problems or expectations for future improvements needed to the service. They can be experts when it comes to making recommendations on improving and expanding the service.

We therefore recommend the proposed legislation be amended to include a member of the SMART Transportation Division to be recognized as a stakeholder under paragraph (b) (4) by adding "(vi) representative of SMART Transportation Division."

With this amendment, we strongly urge your committee to give a favorable report to HB-1367.

Sincerely



Lawrence E. Kasecamp
MD State Legislative Director
 Transportation Division