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**SB 424**

February 12, 2020

**TO:** Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

**FROM:** Nicholas Blendy, Deputy Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 424 - Maryland Transit Administration - Funding (Transit Safety and Investment Act)

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) supports Senate Bill (SB) 424.

SB 424 alters and extends (by five years) provisions of the Maryland Metro/Transit Funding Act (Chapters 351 and 352 of 2018) that require increased operating and capital spending for the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). Specifically, it sets a floor for MTA's operating expenses at the fiscal 2022 appropriation level for fiscal years 2023 through 2027. On the side of capital needs, SB 424 mandates inclusion in the State budget in the Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) a minimum of \$500 million for MTA's capital needs for fiscal years 2022 through 2027.

Ensuring that MTA receives adequate funding is critical to the economies of the Baltimore region and State of Maryland as a whole. MTA's weekday ridership often exceeds 300,000 trips per day. These riders include people traveling to school, work, visiting family and conducting errands. The recently published Capital needs Inventory (CNI) report identified a \$2 billion capital deficit funding gap split evenly between state of good repair and system enhancement needs. Ensuring MTA is able to provide safe, affordable and reliable transportation is critically important to the residents and business in the City of Baltimore.

While MTA is a state agency, its core service area is the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. According to the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, between November 2018 and November 2019, roughly 31,400 new jobs were created in Maryland—23,600 of which were in the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. The BCA states this to highlight just how critical investments in quality transit service are to the health of Maryland's economy.

For the forgoing reasons, we respectfully request a **favorable** report on SB 424.

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