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**Testimony of Ricarra Jones, Political Director of 1199SEIU on
SB 424 – Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act
Position: Support
February 12, 2020**

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Chairman Guy Guzzone and Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee:

1199SEIU Healthcare Workers East is the largest healthcare union in the country with, with over 450,000 members throughout Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Florida and Washington, D.C. **We fully support SB 424.**

In July 2019, pursuant to Section 7-309 of Transportation Articles, Annotated Code of Maryland, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) released its first ever CNI to assess the MTA’s ongoing, unconstrained capital needs. The CNI identified \$5.7 billion of capital needs over the next ten years; of which \$1.5 billion is an accumulated backlog of deferred maintenance. The CTP does not provide the MTA enough over the next six years to address the annual maintenance and repairs in the CNI. In fact, it will add to the backlog.

The result of the neglected maintenance is buses, light rail vehicles, subway trains and commuter trains that break down way more than the MTA’s peer agencies. This leads to poor service which leads to drops in ridership, and a negative spiral.

Everyday, the members of 1199SEIU save lives, deliver babies and care for the sick, seniors and people with disabilities. We are nurses, nurse aides, techs, lab workers, clerks, housekeepers, dietary workers, transporters, pharmacists, social workers and may other types of medical professionals. Unfortunately, our ability to provide care for millions of Marylanders is often affected by unreliable public transportation. Many of our members have no grace period and are disciplined if they are even a minute late for work. As healthcare workers that rely on public transportation, it is crucial **that we arrive on time, every time to provide quality care.**

The Transit Safety & Investment Act under SB 424 will mandate that MTA’s capital budget be at a level that allows it to address all of the needs identified and get the system back into a state of good repair so that it can operate safely and reliably. **We encourage a favorable report.**

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