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**Testimony on SB 424 –
Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act
Budget & Taxation**

Position: Favorable

As a transit and environmental advocate, I support SB 424.

In July 2019, pursuant to §7–309 of the Code of Maryland, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) released its first ever Capital Needs Inventory (CNI) to assess the MTA’s ongoing, unconstrained capital needs. The CNI identified \$5.7 billion of capital needs over the next ten years, \$1.5 billion of which is an accumulated backlog of deferred maintenance. The Maryland Department of Transportation’s FY 2020–2025 Consolidated Transportation Program (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 often than the MTA’s peer agencies. This leads to poor service which leads to drops in ridership, and a negative spiral.

When the WMATA station platform board says “5 minutes” and the train arrives in 5 minutes (give or take a minute or two) --- that’s transit that’s working. WMATA has invested heavily over the past few years in maintenance and equipment upgrades, while on a stringent budget, and it has paid off --- 88% of customer trips are on time and passenger trips increased 4% in 2019. WMATA is living up to its slogan “Getting Back to Good”, running trains safely and on time. There is a lesson here for Maryland --- Let’s Do It!

The Transit Safety & Investment Act 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.