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

Position: Favorable

Sally and Richard Stolz 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.

Almost two years ago we became part of an ever-growing number of people working for alternatives to widening I-270 and I-495 because we believe the research does NOT support widening roads as an effective way of relieving congestion. But getting cars OFF the roads because the public transportation options are efficient, reliable, convenient and inexpensive WILL relieve congestion. Public transportation is also much safer.

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.

Sincerely,

Sally and Richard Stolz