

**Testimony on HB 114 –  
Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act  
Appropriations Committee Hearing February 3, 2021**

Position: **Favorable**

February 1, 2021

I am writing in **support** of HB 114, the Transit Safety & Investment Act.

This bill corrects a failure to recognize a basic principle: if you don't have the time or money to do it right the first time, when are you going to find the time or money to do it over again?

We need a robust public transit system in order to keep our citizens, and our economy, healthy.

- More than 1 in 3 transit riders in the state work in essential job services.
- Hospital and health care workers (the largest share of riders), grocery store workers, childcare professionals, and nursing care staff and other employees use transit to get to work every day.
- Marylanders throughout the state rely on the MTA to get to work, go to school, visit their doctors, and enjoy recreation.
- MTA's subway, light rail, bus and MARC commuter rail vehicles each have one of the worst breakdown rates in the country. MTA buses break down twice as much as buses in other major Northeast cities, and the Metro subway and Central Light Rail recently have undergone emergency shutdowns lasting weeks.
- Transportation is the #1 contributor to climate pollution in Maryland and the U.S. Robust public transit systems reduce traffic congestion by reducing vehicle trips. This cuts greenhouse gas emissions and air pollution that exacerbates respiratory diseases like COVID-19.
- MDOT's capital program last year did not meet MTA's minimum needs; its proposed capital program this year also does not meet that minimum.
- **Providing adequate funding for public transit is a responsibility that the state already has.** It is not a favor or something extra just to satisfy transit advocates.
- MDOT Sec. Slater himself has said that keeping infrastructure in good repair is a case of pay now or pay more later.
- The current administration is not paying now. This will make future taxpayers pay higher costs for worse service.
- This is investment that saves money in the long-term and creates jobs (money spent on maintaining the transportation system creates more jobs per dollar than money spent on new capacity).

I encourage a **FAVORABLE** report for this important legislation.

Sincerely,  
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