



Testimony on HB114
Transit Safety & Investment Act
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Madam Chair and Members of the Appropriations Committee,

My name is Ricarra Jones, and I am the Political Director with 1199SEIU- the largest healthcare union in the nation, where we represent over 10,000 healthcare workers in Maryland. Given the vast amount of environmental, economic, and transportation benefits that this Act would give Marylanders, we are supportive of HB114- The Transit Safety & Investment Act.

For far too long, MTA has not been properly funded resulting in neglected maintenance of buses, light rail, subways, and trains breaking down. This has put rider safety at risk contributing to poor service, that ultimately leads to a drop in ridership and only makes MTA's funding crisis even worse. Without additional funding for MTA to maintain its vehicles and provide better service, this negative spiral will continue.

1199SEIU members save lives on the frontlines of the COVID19 pandemic. Their ability to provide high quality care for millions of Marylanders is often negatively impacted by unreliable public transportation. Many of our members have no "grace period" for tardiness, which leads to them being disciplined if they are only one minute late to work. Healthcare workers must arrive on time every day, not only for their job security but additionally for patient care. It is incontrovertible that caring for a patient cannot be stalled based on unreliable transportation methods and as such, the state must make it a priority for healthcare workers and other essential workers to utilize dependable transportation.

The Transit Safety & Investment Act will mandate that MTA's capital budget be set at a level that allows MTA to address all of the maintenance needs identified, and get the public transportation system back into a state of good repair so it can operate more reliably. We strongly encourage the Committee to issue a FAVORABLE report on this bill.

Respectfully,

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