

Testimony on SB 199
Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
January 20, 2021

Favorable

Let me introduce myself. My name is Ivis Burris & I'm not just a paratransit rider but i ACTUALLY advocate on behalf of other riders who think they have no VOICE. Some CAN'T verbally speak, SEE or HEAR. I also advocate on behalf of nursing facility residents by giving them vital information as how to integrate back into the community through the Home Community Based Option Waiver Program.

Let's get right to the point. Bill HBO144/SB 0199 is very important but not just to me but to those that desperately depend on this service.

It is of the essence that Maryland's transit services receive the proper funding for keeping up with maintenance. To add since WE'RE still in a PANDEMIC I BELIEVE it would be imperative to add funding not take it AWAY! I ride paratransit to doctors appts, wheelchair repair establishments, & to the grocery store. I sure would feel more secure if i knew my health wouldn't be in jeopardy just by riding one of MTA's vehicles.

By me having a tracheostomy, having Muscular Dystrophy & other underlying issues it pains me to have to ponder on whether I would be able to go to & from my destinations in a safe manner. It frightens me even more just thinking of my son who also has Muscular Dystrophy & Down Syndrome being on a broken down bus. In fact, we have both been in situations just LIKE the one I just described.

Let me paint a picture for you. A bus shows up & I attempt to aboard the bus only for the driver & I to find out that the lift doesn't work. Only to find out the repair of the lift was NEVER DONE! U guessed it I have to wait for ANOTHER bus.
I could go on & on with experiences dealing with non maintenance buses.

A FEW OTHER EXAMPLES

1. A driver pulls up at the Kennedy Krieger Institute to pick me up & his bumper is nearly hitting the floor.
2. Waiting on a bus to come get me & my son to take us to an event.
Several hrs go by we NEVER made it to that event.
3. Son has boarded the bus at Chimes to bring him home only to find out the bus has broken down. Son doesn't reach home for several hours.
4. I've been on buses to many to count where they have broken down. One time the driver a female driver had her own tools at hand. She said, "They NEVER have me stuck for hours!"

Thank you for your time.

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