
January 19, 2021

The Honorable Kumar Barve
Chairman, House Environment and Transportation Committee
251 House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 116 – I-270 Commuter Bus Route Study

Dear Chairman Barve and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 116 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

House Bill 116 requires MDOT to study and make recommendations on the feasibility of establishing certain commuter bus routes that serve certain population centers along the I-270 corridor. MDOT is aware of numerous current and ongoing transportation study efforts that include the I-270 and Northern Virginia corridors.

The MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) is currently involved in the following studies which would make the study outlined in House Bill 116 duplicative:

- I-495/American Legion Bridge Transit and TDM Study: This Virginia Department of Rail and Public Transportation (DRPT) and MDOT MTA study will identify a range of current and future multimodal solutions to help manage congestion on the American Legion Bridge. The report will consider potential transit routes connecting Tysons, Frederick, Silver Spring, and Washington, D.C., and will include ridership and cost ranges. A final report is expected in March 2021.
- Corridor Forward: The I-270 Transit Plan: The Montgomery County Planning Department is studying multiple transit service options on I-270 including, but not limited to, express bus, Bus Rapid Transit, rail, and monorail. Final recommendations and proposed actions will be available in 2022.
- I-495 & I-270 P3 Program Transit Coordination Report: This study outlines 11 potential transit services supported or indirectly benefited by the proposed managed lanes, which include start and end points and estimated ridership. The completed study was published in May 2020.

The study outlined in House Bill 116 will place financial constraints on critical capital projects for which funds have already been allocated. Further, it will be duplicative to the existing and ongoing studies which already address the feasibility of commuter bus service. By waiting for the current studies to be completed, MDOT MTA will be in a better position to understand the exact transit needs of the region.

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The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 116.

Respectfully submitted,

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