

HB 1204 FAVORABLE

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As a city resident for most of my 70+ years I started out riding the streetcars to school and have ridden transit whenever possible ever since.

I also have come to realize that the best transit service in Baltimore was when I first rode it in the late 50's and it has been going downhill ever since.

I was forced to buy a car after I got out of the army because I could not reliably get to any place of employment or to UMBC where I was a student without one.

I met Barbara Mikulski fighting the highway through East Baltimore and also worked to stop what is now called the "highway to nowhere" in West Baltimore. My degree from UMBC was in

transportation engineering so I spent many years getting to know transportation issues from the ground up, when I started in the Early 70's Baltimore was ranked as one of the 10 best systems in the country by METRO magazine an industry trade journal. Today the MTA is 28th on the same list by the same people.

As I get older I am wondering how much longer MVA will still consider me safe to drive on the streets of this nation, since I can't rarely get where I need to go on public transit, especially in certain areas of the city. There are food deserts we all hear about but these are also transportation deserts. If I could not drive to a fairly distant grocery store my health and eating habits would deteriorate seriously. I am a lucky one I have a car old but in good shape, but it will probably be the last car I own.

A friend just this week was telling me about taking the bus from Falls rd and Northern parkway to Charles st and Cold Spring lane, a distance of about 20blocks it took over 2hours on the MTA,

she ended up walking home, and this was a daylight time in midweek. Imagine a woman at night or on a weekend having to make that same trip. And think if that trip was in some of what are often thought of as the “less safe” neighborhoods of the city.

The transit service in the Baltimore metro region and in certain “select” areas has gone to quote an old phrase “to hell in a hand-basket” The MTA is quick to show their service map and how it covers the area, but what they don’t say is that is “PEAK” service not the everyday service that the citizens of the area are condemned to wait for. There is an old joke running around that the Pratt Library files MTA schedules under “fiction” this is far closer to the truth than one could imagine.

This bill will not solve all the problems but it will get a clearer picture of the problem which is a first step in solving the problem. You know it is Bad when the Los Angeles transit system has far more subway and light rail than Baltimore.

Thank you