



Olivia Bartlett, Co-Lead, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB0116 Transportation – I-270 Commuter Bus Route Study

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 19, 2021

Bill Contact: Delegate Palakovich Carr

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with more than 2000 members who live in a wide range of communities in Montgomery and Frederick Counties, from Bethesda near the DC line north to Frederick and from Potomac east to Silver Spring and Olney. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep its members healthy and safe in a clean environment.

DTMG strongly supports HB0116 because mass transit is the way of the future in a world warming due to greenhouse gas-induced climate change. We need to have ways to move workers who live in Maryland's northern suburbs to jobs in Washington DC and northern Virginia without using cars. This study will provide the data needed to design and implement rapid commuter bus routes from population centers along the I-270 corridor in Frederick County and Montgomery County to and from the growing job centers in Northern Virginia.

These types of direct commuter bus routes are needed to complement Metro, which ends at Shady Grove Road in Gaithersburg and is therefore difficult to access from suburbs further north and requires multiple line changes to go from northern Montgomery County to northern Virginia job centers.

Job centers in Northern Virginia are growing rapidly and offer a variety of good jobs. In particular, the new Amazon HQ2 under development in National Landing already has hundreds of construction jobs and is expected to bring 25,000 new high-paying white-collar jobs by 2030 and another 12,000+ by 2034. If current Maryland residents could get there easily via direct commuter bus routes, we could keep these residents in our state and local tax bases instead of losing them to communities in Virginia.

Northern Virginia already has The Metroway bus rapid transit system that runs through the area adjacent to National Landing, with 15 stations from Arlington to Alexandria, with some of this route located in an exclusive busway. To remain competitive, Maryland needs a similar commuter bus route.

The study proposed in HB0116 is exactly what's needed to define the parameters of a commuter bus line running from the Frederick area to northern Virginia, and will include input from all the important stakeholder constituencies.

Therefore, DTMG strongly supports HB0116 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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