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*Legislative District 2*  
Washington County

Budget and Taxation Committee

*Subcommittees*

Education, Business and Administration

Pensions



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**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 869 Western Maryland Marc Rail Extension Study**

Chairwoman Kelley & Members of the Finance Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to present SB 869 to you this afternoon.

This bill will add a Western Maryland Area Regional Commuter (MARC) Rail Extension Study to the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT)'s Statewide Transit Plan. This study will provide up to three recommended routes of extending rail into Washington County and beyond, as well as the feasibility and cost of those extensions. This bill also indicates that if the Statewide Transit Plan is postponed or altered for any reason, this specific study will still move forward.

Western Maryland is home to one of the largest cities in Maryland (Hagerstown) that is not currently served by commuter rail. Studying the feasibility with the goal of extending rail to Western Maryland would open up the potential for greater job accessibility, increased tourism, and a reduction in traffic on interstates 70 and 270. Less vehicles on the road will equate to a reduction in pollution and, ultimately, cleaner environments. Additionally, rail service could significantly relieve congestion on the roads with the highest volume during peak hours thus increasing highway safety throughout our interstate system.

Commuter rail would also provide access to higher paying job opportunities, particularly to those that can't afford to buy, insure, and maintain a vehicle. The construction and maintenance of a Western Maryland MARC rail extension would also provide significant economic development opportunities throughout the Western Maryland region. It is likely that private development would occur around transit stations – these projects may include housing developments, new businesses and other facilities, and would provide a great benefit to the surrounding communities.

Thank you for your consideration. I respectfully ask for a favorable report on SB 869.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'P.D. Corderman'.

Paul D. Corderman