



Transportation Alliance

March 4, 2022

Testimony on HB 1324 – *Maryland Rail Investment Act of 2022* Appropriations Committee

Position: Favorable with Amendments

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance would support HB 1324 with certain amendments.

The tolled facilities maintained and operated by the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) are important parts of Maryland's transportation system. Their benefits include providing capacity for the movement of people and goods, and providing access to jobs, services, recreation, and other destinations for people with cars and trucks. However, they also have costs, including traffic delays, impacts to public health from air pollution, and impacts to climate change. Therefore, it is appropriate and constructive to reinvest a portion of the user fees from the tolled facilities into public transportation services that will help Marylanders get places with much lower impacts to traffic, public health and the environment.

Our call for amendments stems from concern about the equity of who benefits most from the reinvestment of the toll revenues. There is evidence that communities near toll facilities and near highways experience higher rates of disease from tailpipe emissions. It is important to prioritize the communities bearing the greatest cost from the MDTA facilities when reinvesting the revenues in transit solutions. Therefore, we recommend amending the bill to determine the communities that experience the highest pollution levels from MDTA facilities, and to direct the reinvestment of incremental revenues to transit projects that benefit those communities.