

**Chair Maggie McIntosh, Vice Chair Mark Chang and esteemed members of the House Appropriations Committee;**

**We are writing to request you issue a favorable report on House Bill 1055.**

Baltimore City Public School students are the only students in the State of Maryland who rely on MTA public transit to get to and from school. It is incumbent on our state's leadership to ensure that MTA buses and trains get City Schools students to school safely and on time, just as students in other Maryland school districts are provided safe, reliable transportation to their schools.

Frequent, reliable, safe, and accessible transit is inextricably tied to the success of Baltimore's students and families, and yet access to transit in this city, like so many other things, is deeply inequitable, too often distributed along the expected lines of race and class.

For decades, the lack of reliable, frequent, and safe public transit has interfered with students' ability to access their education equitably.

[As cited in the Fund For Educational Excellence's report, \*Not in Service\*](#), students traveling to school today feel unsafe on transit, and late buses too frequently cause students to arrive late to school. This tardiness results in lost learning time and impacts student performance and academic standing in school. Additionally, many students pass up extracurricular opportunities like internships, jobs, sports, or clubs because they are concerned about traveling in the dark.

School communities deserve to see tangible improvement in public transit safety, reliability, and efficiency. It is for this reason that we ask the General Assembly to launch a study to better address the root causes of transit inequity for Baltimore City Schools students.

**We believe that our legislators should be bolder in their approach to eradicate transit barriers for our students.**

The workgroup created by this bill will explore innovative solutions to address student concerns with transit frequency and reliability which include additions to the fleet and bus driver increases. Additionally, we see the opportunity to expand Career and Technical Education (CTE) programming at Baltimore City schools to include career opportunities as bus operators and mechanics. Finally, by providing an incentive for students and families who are willing to carpool it offers some relief for buses on routes with high frequency that are often over capacity. It also defrays the costs for families that transport children to school with their own personal vehicle.

As such, we ask the committee to issue a favorable report on House Bill 1055. **We need to elevate transformational change over incremental gains – especially for transit issues that have disadvantaged Baltimore City students for decades.**

With Urgency -

Natasha Escobar, Executive Chair  
Baltimoreans for Educational Equity (BEE)

Roger Schulman, President and CEO  
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