



BALTIMORE

COLLEGETOWN

NETWORK

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BaltimoreCollegetown.org

March 7, 2022

Maggie McIntosh, Chair

Mark S. Chang, Vice-Chair

House Office Building, Room 121

6 Bladen St., Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Support for House Bill 1336

Stance: Support

COLLEGE MEMBERS

Community College
of Baltimore County

Coppin State University

Goucher College

Johns Hopkins University

Loyola University Maryland

Maryland Institute
College of Art

Morgan State University

Notre Dame of Maryland
University

Stevenson University

Towson University

University of Baltimore

University of Maryland,
Baltimore

UMBC

AFFILIATE MEMBERS

Baltimore City

Baltimore County

Madam Chairman, Vice Chair and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the members of the Baltimore Collegetown Network, thank you for the opportunity to support House Bill 1336, which creates the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission to study and make findings related to mass transit in the Baltimore region. Baltimore's transit system does not meet the needs of residents, visitors, and most importantly for Baltimore Collegetown, university students, staff, and faculty. For more than twenty years, college students have said the number 1 challenge facing Baltimore is transportation.

The Baltimore Collegetown Network includes 120,000 students. Every three years we conduct a survey of those college students, which includes the question, "*How likely are you to stay in Baltimore after you graduate?*" In the 2018 results, only 36% of students responded they were "definitely likely" to stay after graduation. Transportation is a key factor in whether a college student finds a city or region to be livable and accessible, and as mentioned before, students do not find Baltimore's transportation reliable, accessible, or in any way meeting their needs. The region loses talent to cities who have transportation systems that connect and work.

In 2019, Baltimore Collegetown studied its own transit system, which has operated for twenty years. Universities came together to create the Baltimore Collegetown shuttle because the city, county, and surround region did not have options that connected universities to desirable destinations in a reliable way. Collegetown Shuttle riders tend to be underrepresented students, predominately Black/African American (46%) and female (61%). Most riders use our shuttle 2-3 times per week and their chief complaint is that it does not come often enough. The Collegetown Shuttle, plus the other privately run university shuttles in the region, offer a stop-gap solution and do not meet students' transit needs.

By developing this commission, with state, local, university, and transit advocate representation, perhaps we can make progress toward real solutions for our students. HB1336 will convene key stakeholders to study and determine the best way forward for Baltimore's transit future. It provides a pathway to retain the next generation of talent for the state of Maryland. Please support HB1336.

Kindest regards,

Kirsten Brinlee, Executive Director

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