

**BROOKE E. LIERMAN**  
*Legislative District 46*  
Baltimore City

Environment and Transportation  
Committee

*Chair*

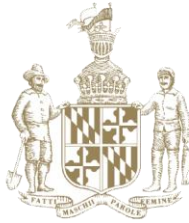
Land Use and Ethics Subcommittee

Joint Committee on Administrative,  
Executive, and Legislative Review

Joint Committee on Ending  
Homelessness

*Co-Chair*

Joint Committee on Pensions



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 410  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3319 • 301-858-3319  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3319  
Brooke.Lierman@house.state.md.us

## THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in support of HB1056

### **Baltimore City – Maryland Transit Administration – Transit Services for Public School Students**

Appropriations Committee \* March 8, 2022

#### **Why this bill matters**

There is currently no centralized, public school bus system in Baltimore and most students rely on public transportation to commute to school. Based on a report from the Baltimore Education Research Consortium, high school students represent between 16.2% and 13.2% of the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) weekday ridership. This same report notes that more than half (58.2%) of students reported that their primary mode of transportation to school is public transit. Most student commuters have complicated routes requiring multiple transfers and modes of transportation. With daily use of public transportation, a logical option for students would be a monthly CharmPass, but this option currently costs \$74.

#### **What this bill does**

This bill ensures that Baltimore City Public School students can keep free access to their main source of transportation to school. During the 2017 legislative session, the Maryland General Assembly passed HB1132/SB1149 requiring the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to provide ridership on transit vehicles to any eligible Baltimore City Public School (BCPS) student from fiscal 2019 through fiscal 2021. This bill, HB1056/SB862, renews the 2017 bill for another 5 years until June 30, 2027 so that students can continue to get to school for free.

#### **Why you should vote for this bill**

For decades, residential segregation and transportation inequity has been a major obstacle for students in Black and Brown communities in Baltimore. Reports show that these transportation obstacles result in poorer academic performance and higher rates of absenteeism for students. This bill attempts to alleviate some of that burden by breaking down a barrier to education. Students all across Baltimore have been benefiting from this transportation program for the past few years. Termination of this ridership provision would have deleterious effects for the school system and our students. Baltimore City students deserve a safe, reliable commuting option that will not put financial strain and psychological stress on them and their families. This bill is one step in that direction. I urge a favorable vote for HB1056.