



**Olivia Bartlett, DoTheMostGood Maryland Team**

**Committee:** Appropriations

**Testimony on:** HB1324 – Transportation – Maryland Rail Authority - Establishment (Maryland Rail Investment Act of 2022)

**Position:** Favorable

**Hearing Date:** March 8, 2022

**Bill Contact:** Delegate Marc Korman

DoTheMostGood (DTMG) is a progressive grass-roots organization with more than 3000 members in all districts in Montgomery County as well as in several nearby jurisdictions. DTMG supports legislation and activities that keep its members healthy and safe in a clean environment and which promote equity across all our diverse communities. DTMG strongly supports HB1324 because better rail service and connections across Maryland will help workers and are vital for achieving Maryland’s greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.

Climate scientists from around the world are delivering increasingly urgent warnings that we must rapidly and dramatically reduce emission of greenhouse gases to limit global warming and avoid the most devastating impacts of climate change. Transportation accounts for a large percentage of greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland and is largely due to commuters in individual cars. Virtually all recommendations for reducing greenhouse gas emissions include decreased use of individual cars and increased use of mass transit for commuting. Many commuters – particularly those from far outlying communities -- would like other ways to get to work and avoid the stress of driving in traffic. Commuting by rail would allow commuters to work, read, knit, sleep, or relax and prepare for their workday.

However, currently there is no Maryland office to promote or coordinate transportation by rail. There is a pressing need for better regional and commuter rail service in Maryland, but the main focus of the Maryland Department of Transportation is on highways. HB1324 directly addresses this problem by establishing the Maryland Rail Authority to finance, oversee, and coordinate rail projects and facilities in Maryland, with specific emphasis on connections to Western and Southern Maryland and improvements to rail service across the DC metropolitan region.

Improvements in rail services will allow more people to use mass transit to get to work, appointments, entertainment, and friends without using their cars – thereby reducing greenhouse gas emissions. These improvements will also unify the state.

Therefore, DTMG strongly supports HB1324 and urges a **FAVORABLE** report on this bill.

Respectfully submitted,

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