

The Baltimore Teachers Union



AFT 340 AFL-CIO
Seton Business Park
5800 Metro Drive
Baltimore, MD 21215-3209

Testimony on HB1055

Transportation - Student Transportation - Transit Buses and Carpooling

Position: **FAVORABLE**

To Chair McIntosh and the Appropriations Committee:

My name is Corey Gaber and I'm a District 40 resident and a Vice President on the Baltimore Teachers Union Executive Board. The Baltimore Teachers Union represents over 7,000 teachers, paraprofessionals, and other school related personnel. BTU supports HB1055 to establish a work study group designed to study the impact of a student carpool incentive program. This incentive program is intended to provide incentives for participating city schools and parents or guardians to arrange a carpool program as a more safe and reliable alternative to public transit.

Baltimore city students have long been unsatisfied and let down by a lack of transportation. Currently, there are about 29,000 Baltimore city middle and high school students (about 73% of all students) that rely on public transportation to get to their schools according to a 2020 study done by the Fund for Educational Excellence. Even prior to this study you could have asked any student or staff member about the impact poor public transportation has on student attendance and tardiness, and how much that loss of learning time impacts student outcomes overall.

Carpooling is a reliable way to help get our Baltimore city students to and from school, especially where transit is not available. While we need to tackle the larger structural issues that have resulted in Baltimore City's poor public transportation infrastructure, we need to simultaneously explore any and all short and long term strategies to help the students, families, and staff members get to where they need to be efficiently and on time.

For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB 1055.

Sincerely,

Corey Gaber, Vice President
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Baltimore Teachers Union