

March 10, 2022

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chairman, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 862 – Transportation - Student Transportation - Transit Buses and Carpooling

Dear Chairman Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 862 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration.

Senate Bill 862 requires the MDOT Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) to provide transit services free of charge to eligible students within Baltimore City Public Schools (BCPSS) and would prohibit the MDOT MTA from collecting reimbursement from BCPSS for these services through fiscal year 2027.

The MDOT MTA has been providing free transit services to BCPSS students since the passage of Senate Bill 1149 in 2017. While the law abrogated in June 2021, the MDOT MTA continues to provide free Student Smart Cards to eligible students. The Student Smart Card allows students to take up to four trips per school day and may be used on regular school days only Monday through Friday, from 5:00am to 8:00pm. Smart Cards are not valid on Saturdays, Sundays, Baltimore City Public School holidays, or days when schools are closed. Each trip allows students 120 minutes of unlimited transfers. BCPSS is the only jurisdiction in the State that does not operate and fund its own transportation system for its students and instead partners with the MDOT MTA to provide these services free of charge.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 862.

Respectfully submitted,

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