

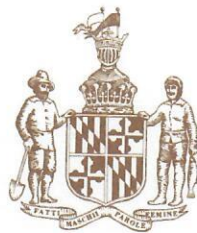
RONALD N. YOUNG
Legislative District 3
Frederick County

Budget and Taxation Committee

Chair, Executive Nominations Committee

Senate Chair, Joint Subcommittee on
Program Open Space/Agricultural Land
Preservation

Joint Committee on Administrative,
Executive, and Legislative Review



The Senate of Maryland

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March 10, 2022

SB838 - SUPPORT

Transportation - Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Service - County Funding

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, Members of the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee,

SB838 requires the Secretary of Transportation to identify a separate amount of the Department of Transportation's annual budget to be used for county elderly and handicapped transportation service. Beginning in fiscal 2025, the Secretary is required to appropriate an amount at least equal to the previous year's funding, adjusted for inflation.

This bill would stabilize the critical Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program (SSTAP). The SSTAP program is funding provided directly to county local transit agencies in Maryland to transport elderly and handicapped persons who are not sufficiently close to existing public transportation routes.¹

Despite the increasing need for this service, funding for SSTAP has been flat for over 20 years.² Meanwhile public transportation providers have experienced growing costs (39.8% from 2009-2018) in every year of service including fuel, vehicles and driver salary.³ One consequence is that passenger trips have dropped from a high of 591,000 in FY 2016 to 315,589 in FY2020 while other transport systems have increased their trips, indicating that this is not purely a pandemic effect.⁴ In addition, the population served by this program is expected to grow at 600% the rate of Maryland's general population.⁵ An example of a specific need is the increase in dialysis patients⁶ and the need for transportation to an increasing number of dialysis centers.⁷

Transportation by SSTAP allows elderly and handicapped persons to live independent lives of dignity within their community. Trips take passengers to jobs, dialysis appointments, doctor's visits, grocery stores and many other activities essential to daily life. This freedom, in turn, can be seen as a cost-savings measure since the average additional cost to Medicare/Medicaid is \$1,784 more per year per nursing home resident over those who age in place.⁸

I ask that you vote favorably on **SB838** to ensure that locally operated transit systems have a stable funding source that can meet rising demands and costs.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Ronald N. Young'. The signature is written in a cursive style with a large 'R' and 'Y'.
Senator Ronald Young

References:

1. Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program. Statement of Policy. Statewide Specialized Transportation Assistance Program - St. Mary's County, MD
2. Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), MDOT December 2021. Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS) Funding related to Non-Emergency medical transportation (NEMT). A report to the Maryland General Assembly. P. 13.
3. National Transit Summaries and Trends (2018) P. 8.
4. MTA, MDOT December 2021 LOTS NEMT Funding Study P 21,22,
5. MDOT February 2018. 2040 Trends Maryland Transportation Plan Technical Memorandum Conditions, Trends and Challenges. P. 23.
6. United States Renal Data System ESRD Prevalent Count | USRDS
7. US Dialysis Finder: Final Report on Paratransit Services for Dialysis Centers. P.1 US Dialysis Finder
8. US Department of Housing and Urban (Fall 2013). Office of Policy Development and Research. Measuring the Costs and Savings of Aging in Place (<https://www.huduser.gov/portal/periodicals/em/fall13/highlight2.html>)



MARYLAND TRANSIT CAUCUS

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Co-Chair: Delegate Lorig Charkoudian
Vice Chair: Senator Pam Beidle
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Secretary: Delegate Julie Palakovich Carr
At-Large Member: Delegate Marc Korman

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee,

The more than 80 members of the Transit Caucus have voted to endorse SB 838 - Transportation - Elderly and Handicapped Transportation Service - County Funding.

The Transit Caucus is a bipartisan group of Senators and Delegates committed to supporting legislation that supports a robust, equitable, modern, and effective transit network that serves all Marylanders. To that end, the Caucus is dedicated to advancing reliable and sustainable transportation options for Marylanders, including but not limited to interconnected public transit, a transition to clean vehicles, and to non-car mobility options and infrastructure to support these options as safe modes of transit. We believe ensuring that every Marylander has access to a variety of safe and reliable mobility options is a critical element of achieving an equitable, prosperous, and healthy state.

The Caucus respectfully requests a favorable report for this legislation.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Senator Malcolm Augustine
Co-Chair

Delegate Lorig Charkoudian
Co-Chair

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Delegate Carl Anderson
Delegate Heather Bagnall
Delegate Sandy Bartlett
Delegate Lisa Belcastro
Delegate Regina Boyce
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