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MAYOR

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SB 514

March 29, 2022

TO: Members of the House Appropriations Committee

FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director, Office of Government Relations

RE: Senate Bill 514 - Transportation - Investment Program - MARC Rail Service
(Maryland Regional Rail Transformation Act)

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Chang, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 514.

SB 514 would require the State of Maryland to investigate and determine opportunities towards improving and expanding MARC rail service. The legislation seeks to leverage the recently passed national infrastructure bill to encourage the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to invest in existing MARC rail infrastructure. Additionally, the bill would require MDOT to complete a 30% design for a proposed Bayview MARC Station during FY2023, providing the eastside of Baltimore City a MARC Station with Penn Line access. Finally, the bill establishes a Transportation Trust Fund Workgroup to study and make recommendations on state and federal funding sources and related funding needs.

The recently adopted federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act provides MDOT a unique opportunity to consider future investment into MARC rail service. MARC's Penn Line exists on the busiest corridor within Amtrak's portfolio, the Northeast Corridor (NEC). House Bill 778 would require MDOT to complete 15% designs for a 4th rail to be added to the Penn Line. Increased rail capacity plus the potential addition of a new MARC station at Johns Hopkins Bayview in East Baltimore could prove to be a valuable economic development tool for the City's eastside.

Improving MARC rail service stands to benefit both the State of Maryland and the City of Baltimore by providing residents with increased mobility opportunities.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 514.