

# **HB1336\_testimony\_Senate.pdf**

Uploaded by: Anna Ellis

Position: FAV

March 31, 2022

**Testimony on HB 1336 –  
Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission –  
Finance**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

My name is Anna Ellis. As a lifelong user of the Baltimore transit system, I would like to testify from a rider's perspective.

The Baltimore region deserves a reliable, well-functioning transit system. The current governance is not responsive to the needs of transit riders.

There are almost daily delays on the light rail. In my own experience since mid-October, 2021, when full light rail service was restored, it has been on time 65% of the time when I have used the service.

Riding the bus is another story. Of the 27 bus trips I attempted since last June, the bus was on time just 52% of the time, late 15%, early 15%, and did not show up at all 18% of the time. This is very much in contrast with the MTA's on time performance statistics, in large part because they do not count scheduled trips that do not occur in their on time performance statistics.

Unresponsiveness at MTA is not new. In 2005, after the double-tracking of light rail was complete, the new ticket machines did not work regularly. I called the MTA many times and kept track of when and where the machines did not work. There was no response, even after I sent a letter to the head of customer service for MTA. The problem was addressed only after I called the Sun, and they did a story about the malfunctioning ticket machines.

While the pandemic may have exacerbated the reliability problems and unresponsiveness at MTA, it certainly cannot be blamed for the issues we have experienced for decades.

Creating a regional transportation authority is needed because it should make the system more responsive to rider's needs, which is a first step to making the system more reliable, a necessary ingredient for a well-functioning transit system.

I support HB1336 to explore a transition to a regional transit authority. I respectfully encourage a favorable report. Thank you.



# **HB 1336 Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and F**

Uploaded by: Barbara Matheson

Position: FAV



## **HB 1336 Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission**

### **Testimony before Senate Finance Committee**

**March 31, 2022**

**Position: Favorable**

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Barbara Matheson, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB 1336**. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the efforts of Delegate Bridges on this bill.

The purpose of HB 1336 is to create a Transit Governance and Funding Commission to review findings of the Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study concluded in August 2021. The charge is to study, analyze, and make recommendations to improve public transit in the Greater Baltimore region.

The Maryland Transit Authority (MTA) is one of the few urban regions that relies on state government to run its transit system. The centralized governance structure is not delivering the service riders need. Citizens of Baltimore, 30% of whom do not own cars, cannot find dependable transportation to work, medical facilities, and social activities. Job opportunities are stifled. Safety is compromised. University officials report students find the city a difficult place to live, and this results in loss of enrollment. The public transportation system disadvantages far too many people already disadvantaged by poverty and structural racism. The system needs to be more equitable.

Greater Baltimore is at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit. New governance would not only improve accountability and oversight at the local level, but also empower commercial development of the greater Baltimore/DC area.

The transportation sector is the largest and fastest-growing source of climate disrupting pollution in Maryland. The vehicle emissions - which include cars, buses, trucks, planes, trains, ships, and freight—produce approximately 38 percent of all greenhouse gas emissions in the state. Tailpipe emissions from gas and diesel-powered vehicles are the largest source of health damaging pollution, responsible for 1 in 5 childhood asthma cases and are linked to various cancers, heart disease, emphysema and other respiratory diseases that may lead to premature death. Reductions in ridership is contributing to climate crisis.

The creation of a Transit Governance and Funding Commission is the next logical step toward solving the many serious problems of an inadequate and dated public transit system.

**We respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 1336.**

Barbara Matheson.  
Columbia, Maryland

**HB1336\_Baltimore\_Transit\_Commission\_MLC\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Cecilia Plante

Position: FAV



## TESTIMONY FOR HB1336 Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission

**Bill Sponsor:** Delegate Bridges

**Committee:** Finance

**Organization Submitting:** Maryland Legislative Coalition

**Person Submitting:** Cecilia Plante, co-chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in strong support of HB1336 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Baltimore needs its own Transportation Authority. The transportation challenges in our largest city do not mirror any of the challenges that we have with the rest of the state. Additionally, Baltimore has been given few resources and little support in trying to resolve its transportation problems. Baltimore has been left with an underfunded, unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

Moreover, the lack of local participation in planning and funding decisions has been a contributing factor to ongoing maintenance problems (MTA buses and trains have some of the highest breakdown rates in the nation) and lack of significant expansion or improvement (last expansion of the system was in 1997). Of the 50 largest transit agencies in the country, the MTA is the only one that is part of a state department of transportation without a board of directors and where decision-making lies solely with a governor.

HB 1336 creates a governance and funding commission, which will include the voices of key regional and state stakeholders, to answer key questions on how to create a new Baltimore Regional Transportation Authority. Informed by the commission's findings, the General Assembly will then be able to draft authorizing legislation to make that authority a reality. We believe that reforming the current system and creating that authority is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.

We strongly support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.



**HB1336 -- 03.31.22- (in Senate) Greater Baltimore**

Uploaded by: Donald Fry

Position: FAV



# POSITION STATEMENT

**TESTIMONY PRESENTED TO THE SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**

**HOUSE BILL 1336 – GREATER BALTIMORE  
TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING COMMISSION**

**Sponsor – Delegate Bridges**

**March 31, 2022**

**DONALD C. FRY  
PRESIDENT & CEO  
GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

**Position: Support**

House Bill 1336 establishes the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission to study and make recommendations about the funding, governance, and performance of mass transit in the greater Baltimore region. The members of the Commission would include: one member of each legislative chamber, each appointed by the respective presiding officer; one individual who is an expert on mass transit issues in the region, one from the Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300, one from a transportation trade association, and one from the business community in the Greater Baltimore region, all appointed by the Governor; and three individuals from Baltimore City, two individuals from Baltimore County, one individual from Anne Arundel County, and one individual from Howard County, each appointed by the mayor or county executive of the jurisdiction.

The Commission would be charged with reviewing the findings of the Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study published by the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board in August of 2021. It would be required to recommend alternative governance and funding models for the Baltimore area transit system, identifying potential approaches that equitably distribute governance and funding responsibilities in mass transit, and improve performance, accountability, and ridership on Baltimore's transit system. An interim report would be required on December 1, 2022, with a final report due on December 1, 2023.

In 2008, the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) released a report titled: The Utility of Creating a Transportation or Transit Authority in the Baltimore Region. The report examined transit and transportation authorities around the country, looking at various types of boards, features necessary to a successful authority, and mechanisms for public accountability and transparency. While the report did not lay out a definitive path forward for creating an authority, it did highlight the complexity of such an undertaking as well as important components to be included in any plan.

The GBC maintains that having a locally accountable entity responsible for transportation decisions is a desirable goal. The difficulty in the creation of such an entity comes from the dissonance created by the inevitable shift of power and funding away from existing entities to the new governance structure. It is imperative that the Commission address these difficult issues, as well as make certain that there are reliable funding mechanisms in place to support the needs of the transportation system managed by any new entity.

House Bill 1336 is consistent with a key tenet in Gaining the Competitive Edge: Keys to Economic Growth and Job Creation in Maryland, a report published by the GBC that identifies eight core pillars for a competitive business environment and job growth:

**GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • [www.gbc.org](http://www.gbc.org)

**Superior transportation infrastructure with reliable funding mechanisms.** An essential prerequisite of a competitive business environment includes a well-funded and maintained highway, transit, port, and airport infrastructure that provides reliable and efficient options to move people, goods, and services.

For these reasons, the GBC respectfully requests the Committee give House Bill 1336 a favorable report.

*The Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC) is a non-partisan, independent, regional business advocacy organization comprised of hundreds of businesses -- large, medium and small -- educational institutions, nonprofit organizations and foundations located in Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Carroll, Harford, and Howard counties as well as Baltimore City. The GBC is a 67-year-old, private-sector membership organization with a rich legacy of working with government to find solutions to problems that negatively affect our competitiveness and viability.*

**HB 1336\_CMTA Bikemore\_fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Eric Norton

Position: FAV



**Transportation  
Alliance**



**Bikemore**

March 31, 2022

**Testimony on HB 1336 –  
*Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission*  
Finance**

**Position: Favorable**

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance and Bikemore support HB 1336.

Leaders in the Greater Baltimore region are seeking to reform the way public transportation is governed and financed. Structural challenges in the current centralized governance structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) make maintaining and improving transit performance difficult. The result is an unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth, and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

Moreover, the lack of local participation in planning and funding decisions has been a contributing factor to ongoing maintenance problems (MTA buses and trains have some of the highest breakdown rates in the nation) and lack of significant expansion or improvement (last expansion of the system was in 1997). Of the 50 largest transit agencies in the country, the MTA is the only one that is part of a state department of transportation without a board of directors and where decision-making lies solely with a governor.

In 2020 the Transportation Alliance co-commissioned, along with the Greater Washington Partnership, the *Transit Reform for Maryland Report* by the Eno Center for Transportation, a national expert on transportation policy. The Eno report laid out three models for transit governance reform and funding alternatives. The following year a separate report from the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) laid out six models. Both reports address high-level questions such as, who operates the transit service, does the state contribute funding, do local governments contribute money, what are potential sources for revenue, and who is the governing body responsible and accountable for policy and funding decisions.

However, the reports did not address some critical considerations, such as what are the exact geographic boundaries, which transportation modes should be included, how should the state's annual financial commitment be determined, what additional revenue sources should be utilized, and what would be the makeup of a governance board, among others. Additionally, neither report recommends a specific model and the specific steps needed to make that a reality.

HB 1336 creates a governance and funding commission representative of key regional and state stakeholders to answer those questions and recommend a path forward. Informed by the commission's findings, the General Assembly will then be able to draft authorizing legislation to make that authority a reality. We believe that reforming the current system and creating that authority is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.

We respectfully encourage a favorable report.

**HB 1336\_TMT Coalition\_fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Eric Norton

Position: FAV



March 31, 2022

**Testimony on HB 1336 –  
Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission –  
Finance**

**Position: FAVORABLE**

The Transform Maryland Transportation Coalition supports HB 1336.

Leaders in the Greater Baltimore region are seeking to reform the way public transportation is governed and financed. Structural challenges in the current centralized governance structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) make maintaining and improving transit performance difficult. The result is an unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

Moreover, the lack of local participation in planning and funding decisions has been a contributing factor to ongoing maintenance problems (MTA buses and trains have some of the highest breakdown rates in the nation) and lack of significant expansion or improvement (last expansion of the system was in 1997). Of the 50 largest transit agencies in the country, the MTA is the only one that is part of a state department of transportation without a board of directors and where decision-making lies solely with a governor.

Over the last two years the conversation around governance reform has benefited from two important reports. In fall 2020, the Transit Reform for Maryland Report by the Eno Center for Transportation laid out three models for transit governance. In summer 2021, a separate report from the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board (BRTB) laid out six models. The reports address high-level questions such as, who operates the transit service, does the state contribute funding, do local governments contribute money, what are potential sources for revenue, and who is the governing body responsible and accountable for policy and funding decisions.

However, the reports did not address some critical considerations, such as what are the exact geographic boundaries, which transportation modes should be included, how should the state's annual financial commitment be determined, what additional revenue sources should be utilized,



and what would be the makeup of a governance board, among others. Additionally, neither report recommends a specific model and the specific steps needed to make that a reality.

HB 1336 creates a governance and funding commission representative of key regional and state stakeholders to answer those outstanding questions. Informed by the commission's findings, the General Assembly will then be able to draft authorizing legislation to create a new regional transportation authority for Greater Baltimore. We believe that reforming the current system and creating that authority is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.

The Transform Maryland Transportation Coalition respectfully encourages a favorable report.

*Current Transform Maryland Transportation Coalition members are:*

*ArchPlan Inc.*

*Associated Black Charities*

*Bikemore*

*Brandywine TB Coalition*

*Cedar Lane Environmental Justice Ministry*

*Central Maryland Transportation Alliance*

*Climate Law & Policy Project*

*Coalition for Smarter Growth*

*Consultant in Early Cancer Detection*

*Disability Rights Maryland*

*Downtown Residents Advocacy Network (Baltimore)*

*Elders Climate Action Maryland*

*Environmental Justice Ministry Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church*

*Fund for Educational Excellence*

*HoCo Climate Action*

*Indivisible Howard County*

*Labor Network for Sustainability*

*Maryland League of Conservation Voters*

*Maryland Legislative Coalition*

*Maryland Sierra Club*

*NAACP Maryland State Conference*

*Policy Foundation of Maryland*

*Progressive Maryland*

*The League for People with Disabilities*

*Transit Choices*

*Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland*

*Union of Concerned Scientists*

*Voices Maryland*

*Washington Area Bicyclist Association*

# **Crossover HB1336 MCRC Testimony 2022.pdf**

Uploaded by: Isadora Stern

Position: FAV



Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition

**Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee**  
**HB1336: Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission**  
**Position: Favorable**

March 31, 2022

The Honorable Delores Kelley, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
cc: Members, Senate Finance Committee

Honorable Chair Kelley and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition (MCRC) is a statewide coalition of individuals and organizations that advances economic rights and financial inclusion for Maryland consumers through research, education, direct service, and advocacy. Our 8,500 supporters include consumer advocates, practitioners, and low-income and working families throughout Maryland.

We are writing today in support of HB1336.

Leaders in the Greater Baltimore region are seeking to reform the way public transportation is governed and financed. Structural challenges in the current centralized governance structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) make maintaining and improving transit performance difficult. The result is an unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

Baltimore City has the most expensive auto insurance of any county in Maryland. These high costs make it extremely difficult for low-income families to reach high paying jobs. Without a car and with a limited public transit system, it is nearly impossible to achieve economic mobility. In 2019, Maryland ranked among the bottom ten states for quality of state transportation infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> Even in regions with strong transit systems, many low-income families have trouble reaching jobs for which they are qualified. Some are forced to turn down good positions in favor of lower paying ones with transit access.

The lack of local participation in planning and funding decisions has been a contributing factor to ongoing maintenance problems (MTA buses and trains have some of the highest breakdown rates in the nation) and lack of significant expansion or improvement (last expansion of the system was in 1997). Of

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rankings/infrastructure/transportation>



Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition

the 50 largest transit agencies in the country, the MTA is the only one that is part of a state department of transportation without a board of directors and where decision-making lies solely with a governor.

HB1336 creates a governance and funding commission representative of key regional and state stakeholders to answer key questions on how to create a new Baltimore Regional Transportation Authority. Informed by the commission's findings, the General Assembly will then be able to draft authorizing legislation to make that authority a reality. We believe that reforming the current system and creating that authority is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.

For these reasons, we support HB1336 and urge a favorable report.

Best,  
Isadora Stern  
Policy Associate

**BaltimoreCounty\_FAV\_HB1336.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joel Beller

Position: FAV



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

JOEL N. BELLER  
*Acting Director of Government Affairs*

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG  
*Associate Director of Government Affairs*

MIA R. GOGEL  
*Associate Director of Government Affairs*

**BILL NO.:**           **House Bill 1336**

**TITLE:**             **Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission**

**SPONSOR:**        **Delegate Bridges**

**COMMITTEE:**     **Finance**

**POSITION:**       **SUPPORT**

**DATE:**            **March 31, 2022**

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** House Bill 1336 – Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission. This bill would establish the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and funding commission to evaluate the findings of the Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study.

Since taking office, Baltimore County Executive Johnny Olszewski has made tremendous strides to improve local transit services by consolidating its transportation initiatives within the transportation bureau under the previously-named Department of Public Works. Since this transition, the Department has been renamed to the Department of Public Works and Transportation (DPW-T) to fully capture the County’s commitment to enhanced local transit for all residents. DPW-T has been critical to the establishment of a first of its kind Baltimore County circulator, The Loop and is planning for potential expansion of this service throughout the County.

Baltimore County’s efforts to connect residents at low cost to resources and opportunities across the region cannot be done alone. Through collaboration, regional partners can collectively act to increase the access, quality, and usage of our transportation services. In August 2021, the Baltimore Regional Transportation Board evaluated transit governance and funding in the Baltimore Region and put out a series of recommendations for different paths forward. HB 1336 would evaluate the Board’s findings and narrow down options for bringing regional partners together to connect our communities with a world-class transit system.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on HB 1336. For more information, please contact Joel Beller, Acting Director of Government Affairs at [jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jbeller@baltimorecountymd.gov).

# **HB1336\_Greater Washington Partnership\_Favorable.pd**

Uploaded by: John Hillegass

Position: FAV

March 30, 2022

The Honorable Delores Kelley  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***Re: Support for House Bill 1336 - Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission***

Dear Chair Kelley and Committee Members,

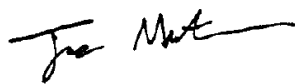
On behalf of the Greater Washington Partnership (the Partnership), I am writing to express our support for House Bill 1336, which would establish the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission to study and make recommendations for how to improve public transit performance and create a high-quality transit network that more reliably serves Maryland residents and businesses.

The Partnership is a civic alliance of leading employers in the Capital Region of Baltimore, Washington, and Richmond, who together employ more than 300,000 residents and are committed to making this region one of the best places to live, work, and build a business. In 2018, the Partnership released the [Blueprint for Regional Mobility](#), an action-oriented strategy to transform the Capital Region's transportation system into an asset that ensures our global competitiveness, including a recommendation to create a new regional governance and funding structure with shared responsibility between the state and local jurisdictions for the Baltimore region's public transportation system. In 2020, we partnered with the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance to support the Eno Center's report [Transit Reform for Maryland](#) that explored the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) current governance and funding model and options for reform. HB 1336 builds on this work by creating an official public commission to study and identify the preferred pathway for transit governance reform.

According to the Eno Center's report, of the 50 largest transit agencies, "Baltimore is the only one that is governed and operated by a state agency without a board of directors," limiting local oversight, buy-in, and participation in the planning and operations of the transit system. While the Baltimore metro area has not opened a new rapid transit service in a quarter century, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority nearby has opened several new stations and expansions. Reforms to MTA's governance structure are needed to enhance accountability and the Baltimore region's sense of shared responsibility to create a reliable 21<sup>st</sup> century transit system.

The approach in this bill is promising and we are encouraged by its introduction. We urge a favorable report from the committee to continue this critical conversation about regional transit governance reform and accountability.

Sincerely,



Joe McAndrew  
Vice President for Government Affairs & Infrastructure



**HB 1336\_MTBMA\_FAV (Finance).pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Sakata

Position: FAV



March 31, 2022

Senator Delores G. Kelley, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 1336 – FAVORABLE – Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission**

Dear Chair Kelley and Members of the Finance Committee:

The Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association (“MTBMA”) has been and continues to serve as the voice for Maryland’s construction transportation industry since 1932. Our association is comprised of 200 members. MTBMA encourages, develops, and protects the prestige of the transportation construction and materials industry in Maryland by establishing and maintaining respected relationships with federal, state, and local public officials. We proactively work with regulatory agencies and governing bodies to represent the interests of the transportation industry and advocate for adequate state and federal funding for Maryland’s multimodal transportation system.

House Bill 1336 seeks to establish the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission who will study, analyze, and make recommendations regarding changes to the funding and governance of transit in the greater Baltimore region.

MTBMA applauds the Sponsor for the forward thinking that this bill provides. We strongly believe legislation like HB 1336 is the precursor to regional transportation authorities across Maryland, an idea that we strongly support. Regional transportation authorities have proven very effective in other jurisdictions around the country, allowing specific regions within a state to produce enough revenue to fund and support mass transportation projects and efforts in those defined regions. We are excited about this legislation and look forward to being included on the Commission.

We appreciate you taking the time to address this issue, and we urge a favorable report on House Bill 1336.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael Sakata", is written over a faint, light blue circular watermark or stamp.

Michael Sakata  
President and CEO  
Maryland Transportation Builders and Materials Association

**HB 1336\_TTF\_FAV (Finance).pdf**

Uploaded by: Michael Sakata

Position: FAV



March 31, 2022

Senator Delores G. Kelley, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: HB 1336 – FAVORABLE – Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission**

Dear Chair Kelley and Members of the Finance Committee:

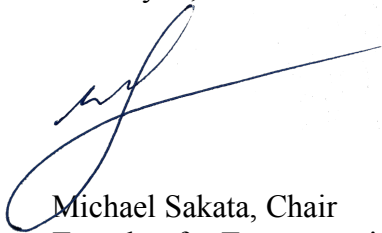
Together for Transportation Funding, a coalition comprised of the industry's leaders in transportation construction, was formed as a response to the years' long record of insufficient transportation funding to research, evaluate, and educate on new potential sources of revenue across the State.

House Bill 1336 seeks to establish the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission who will study, analyze, and make recommendations regarding changes to the funding and governance of transit in the greater Baltimore region.

We applaud the Sponsor for the forward thinking that this bill provides. We strongly believe legislation like HB 1336 is the precursor to regional transportation authorities across Maryland, which is one of our Coalition's top four priorities. Regional transportation authorities have proven very effective in other jurisdictions around the country, allowing specific regions within a state to produce enough revenue to fund and support mass transportation projects and efforts in those defined regions. We are excited about this legislation and look forward to possible involvement on the Commission.

We appreciate you taking the time to address this issue, and we urge a favorable report on House Bill 1336.

Thank you,



Michael Sakata, Chair  
Together for Transportation Funding

**HB1336-FIN-FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Natasha Mehu

Position: FAV



BRANDON M. SCOTT  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**HB 1336**

March 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022

**TO:** Members of the Finance Committee

**FROM:** Natasha Mehu, Director, Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 1336 – Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission

**POSITION: SUPPORT**

Chair Kelley, Vice-Chair Feldman, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill 1336.

HB 1336 would establish a Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission. The newly established commission would be tasked with conducting research and providing recommendations related to transit funding, governance, and performance in the greater Baltimore region. The work of this Commission would build from the *Baltimore Region Transit Governance and Funding Study* completed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council in 2021. The legislation requires the Commission to complete an interim report by December 1, 2022 and a final report by December 1, 2023 for submission to the Governor and the Maryland General Assembly.

A critical step towards improving transit service across the greater Baltimore region is to review our current transit funding, governance, and performance conditions and compare with transit agencies serving other American metropolitan areas. The current governance structure, with Baltimore's core transit services being delivered by a state agency, MDOT MTA, is uncommon for a large American metropolitan area. Currently, MDOT MTA must balance serving their core Baltimore service area with the transit needs of Maryland in its entirety.

Identifying opportunities to strengthen the greater Baltimore region's transit future is critically important to the economic wellbeing of both Baltimore City and the State of Maryland.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a **favorable** report on House Bill 1336.

*Annapolis – phone: 410.269.0207 • fax: 410.269.6785  
Baltimore – phone: 410.396.3497 • fax: 410.396.5136  
<https://mogr.baltimorecity.gov/>*

**HB 1336 Testimony 3-31-22.pdf**

Uploaded by: Paul Sturm

Position: FAV



**Testimony on HB 1336 –  
Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission –  
Senate Finance Committee**

March 31, 2022

**Position: FAVORABLE**

The Downtown Residents Advocacy Network (Baltimore) is pleased to support HB 1336.

Leaders in the Greater Baltimore region are seeking to reform the way public transportation is governed and financed. Structural challenges in the current centralized governance structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) make maintaining and improving transit performance difficult, resulting in an unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

Moreover, the lack of local participation in planning and funding decisions has been a contributing factor to ongoing maintenance problems (MTA buses and trains have some of the highest breakdown rates in the nation) and lack of significant expansion or improvement (last expansion of the system was in 1997). Of the 50 largest transit agencies in the country, the MTA is the only one which is part of a state department of transportation without a board of directors and where decision-making lies solely with a governor.

HB 1336 creates a governance and funding commission representative of key regional and state stakeholders to answer key questions on how to create a new Baltimore Regional Transportation Authority. Informed by the commission's findings, the General Assembly will then be able to draft authorizing legislation to make that authority a reality.

We believe that reforming the current system and creating that authority is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.



We respectfully encourage a favorable report.

Thank you,

***Paul Sturm***

Chair, Downtown Residents Advocacy Network

# **HB1336\_TransitChoices\_fav.pdf**

Uploaded by: Robin Budish

Position: FAV



516 N. Charles Street, Suite 312 - Baltimore, Maryland 21201

March 31, 2022

**Testimony on HB 1336 –  
*Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission –  
Finance***

**Position: FAVORABLE**

Transit Choices supports HB 1336.

Leaders in the Greater Baltimore region are seeking to reform the way public transportation is governed and financed. Structural challenges in the current centralized governance structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) make maintaining and improving transit performance difficult. The result is an unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

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HB 1336 creates a governance and funding commission representative of key regional and state stakeholders to answer key questions on how to create a new Baltimore Regional Transportation Authority. Informed by the commission's findings, the General Assembly will then be able to draft authorizing legislation to make that authority a reality. We believe that reforming the current system and creating that authority is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.

We respectfully encourage a favorable report.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

*Robin Budish*

Robin Budish

Director

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Position: FAV



## **HB1336 – Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission**

### **Testimony before Senate Finance Committee**

**March 31, 2022**

#### **Position: Favorable**

Madam Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony today in support of HB1336, which would establish the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission. We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Bridges in sponsoring this important legislation.

Currently, the Greater Baltimore area leaders have little to no say how the transit system is funded, managed, or updated, instead it is left up to the Governor and their appointee. The Mayors and County Executives around Baltimore should be involved in this process because they will have a better understanding of what their constituents need when it comes to public transportation. The proposed Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding Commission will add these leaders to the process.

Meanwhile, Maryland and the Greater Baltimore area are already experiencing the impacts of climate change with more severe storms and hotter days. Adding to that, prices keep rising for all aspects of owning your own car, with the price of new and used cars increasing, as well as gas, and maintenance increasing. Adding these factors together demonstrates why it is necessary to ensure the transit system in the state is top of the line, so all people can get where they need to go when they need to be there using environmentally and economically friendly means. This bill starts in a good place by creating the Greater Baltimore Transit Governance and Funding commission with the goal of reviewing the findings of the Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study published in August of 2021 and making recommendations regarding the need for changes to the funding and governance of the transit system in the area. It will also try to find ways to ensure equitable distribution in governance and funding. All of this will hopefully lead to improved performance, possible increase in funding, new mass transit options, and an increase of accessibility for the people in the greater Baltimore area.

In the end, a Governance Commission will provide a seat at the table for the leaders of the Baltimore area. It should also lead to increased usage and decreased personal use of cars (increases CO<sub>2</sub> output and adds to the impacts of climate change), while saving residents money.

For these reasons, we support HB1336.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Virginia Smith  
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