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February 17, 2022

The Honorable Chairman Maggie McIntosh and
Members of the House Appropriations Committee

RE: SUPPORT HB-778

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 600
LAWRENCE KASECAMP

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
KENZELL CRAWFORD

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHNNY WALKER

Local 1949
ERIC BILSON

As Legislative Director in Maryland for the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Worker's (SMART) we urge your committee to support HB-778, "*Transportation - Investment Program - MARC Rail Service (Maryland Regional Rail Transformation Act).*"

HB-778 would require the Administration to establish individual investment programs for enhancing, modernizing, and expanding the current Brunswick, Camden, and Penn lines of the Maryland Area Regional Commuter rail service (MARC).

Our organization has been an advocate for updating, improving, and expanding MARC rail service for many years. Our members experience the affects the lack of maintenance over the years has had on the systems. They also work directly with the public and hear the complaints of the unreliable service, the system being in disrepair and in need of modernization and expansion. Correcting and addressing these problems are goals every transit system should strive for, and this proposed legislation to finance and expand MARC rail service will go a long way toward these goals.

The current number one issue as subject matter by the legislature is climate change and the environment. A modern and successful transit system is good for the environment.

The thousands of automobiles on the roadways everyday results in extremely high emissions of greenhouse gases. In addition, the number one complaint from the traveling public is roadway congestion. The proper investment to modernize and expand the MARC rail system will go a long way towards helping to solve these problems by reducing the number of automobiles on the road which in turn reduces congestion and pollution.

A successful transit system is also great for businesses. It improves the business climate as it expands the pool of employees; it expands public access to businesses; and it reduces sprawl when transit-oriented development projects locate based on access to a successful transit system.

With the passage of the Transit Safety and Investment Act last year by the General Assembly and the available investments the Federal Government has signaled for rail transit, there is no better time than now to move forward with the investments to modernize and expand MARC's rail commuter service.

Virginia has recognized the benefits of modernizing and expanding rail service in their state, it's time for Maryland to get on board! Our organization is in strong support of this proposed legislation.

We urge a favorable report on HB-778.

Sincerely

Lawrence E. Kasecamp
MD State Legislative Director
SMART Transportation Division