

Baltimore's Transit Future support for BMC Transit

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Position: FAV

BALTIMORE'S TRANSIT FUTURE

March 14, 2023

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, House Appropriations Committee

***Re: Support for House Bills 0491, 0794, & 1072 | Senate Bills 0465, 0876, & 0875
The Commission to Study Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority; The Establishment of
the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission; & The Task Force to Study the Reconstitution of the
Maryland Transportation Commission***

Dear Chair Barnes and Committee Members,

On behalf of the signatories listed below, we are writing to express our support for House Bills 0491, 0794, & 1072 and cross-filed Senate Bills 0465, 0876, & 0875. The package of bills that we support are the recommendations of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's (BMC) Baltimore Regional Transit Funding and Governance Workgroup (Workgroup) that was tasked with developing strategies to empower and strengthen transit in the Baltimore region – a goal that the Baltimore's Transit Future coalition firmly supports.

The BMC Workgroup met over the second half of 2022 to examine the governance and funding structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and locally operated transit systems to develop options for increased equity, transparency, and regional decision making in the distribution of funds and transit project prioritization in the Baltimore region. The Workgroup included elected officials, business, public-sector, labor leaders, and technical experts from around the Baltimore metropolitan region. Their work culminated in a [final report](#) and legislative recommendations. The package of bills is outlined below:

- **House Bill 0491 | Senate Bill 0465** would create a commission to study the establishment of a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) as the Baltimore region is the only large metropolitan area in the nation whose transit is operated by a state agency without oversight of any board or commission. The commission would complete its work on or before October 31, 2024.
- **House Bill 0794 | Senate Bill 0876** would establish a Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC), as a regional authority is being studied, to create a formal mechanism for a state-local collaboration into how the local and regional transit network is planned, built, operated and funded.
- **House Bill 1072 | Senate Bill 0875** would establish a Task Force to study the reconstitution of the Maryland Transportation Commission (MTC) to provide the group the authority to provide oversight and transparency into the state's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) development. The intention of this change is to increase engagement and transparency around statewide transportation funding allocations and long-range plans, which is currently opaque. The Task Force would complete its work on or before December 31, 2024.

BALTIMORE'S TRANSIT FUTURE

The lack of collaboration between the state and local leaders into the planning, funding, and operations of the Baltimore region's transit system has hampered the development of a 21st century regional transit system that can adequately support inclusive economic growth, workforce development, and the needs of the region's most disenfranchised communities. Together, these bills would ensure that the governance and funding structure of Greater Baltimore's transit system are designed to be more responsive to the needs of the region's residents, businesses, and institutions.

The undersigned signatories and organizations request favorable reports for the package of bills because of their ability to strengthen regional coordination, decision making, and funding.

Sincerely,

Ballard Spahr LLP	Howard County Chamber of Commerce
Baltimore City Chamber of Commerce	Johns Hopkins University and Medicine
Baltimore Collegetown Network	Kaiser Permanente
Baltimore MARC Riders	Mahogany, Inc.
CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield	MedStar Health
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance	PNC
EcoMap Technologies	Tradepoint Atlantic
Greater Baltimore Committee	Transit Choices
Greater Washington Partnership	University of Maryland, Baltimore

About the Baltimore's Transit Future Campaign

The [Greater Baltimore Committee](#) and [Greater Washington Partnership](#) launched the Baltimore's Transit Future campaign to call attention to the urgent business imperative and need for the Greater Baltimore region to create a world-class public transit system that helps create shared economic prosperity and catalyzes inclusive growth. Since June 2022, more than 65 business, civic, and non-profit organizations, including many of the largest employers in the State, have joined the campaign encouraging regional focus on six priorities:

1. Address the transit system's repair backlog and operator shortage.
2. Establish frequent, reliable transit service to regional job centers.
3. Support regional coordination, decision making, and funding.
4. Implement a 10-year rapid transit expansion program.
5. Prioritize regional rail investment.
6. Catalyze equitable development at transit and rail stations.

The time for action is now. The residents and businesses of Maryland's largest city and surrounding suburbs deserve a world-class transit system. These six strategic priorities will set the course for a more equitable transportation system, making the Baltimore region a more attractive place to live, work, play, and build a business.

HB 1072 - Task Force to Study the Reconstitution o

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FWA



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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President

Donna S. Edwards

Secretary-Treasurer

Gerald W. Jackson

**HB 1072 - Task Force to Study the Reconstitution of the Maryland Transportation Commission
House Appropriations Committee
March 16, 2023**

SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

**Donna S. Edwards
President**

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1072 with amendments. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

HB 1072 creates a task force that will study changes to the Maryland Transportation Commission. The proposed task force includes riders, business groups, legislators, and industry experts, but does not include any worker representatives. The composition of study commissions have long term effects on their recommendations. The decisions of this study group will impact thousands of transportation workers across Maryland.

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 689, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300, SMART Transportation Division, and Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers and Trainmen can provide essential expertise and institutional knowledge. Simple recommendations or proposals that may seem innocent can have disastrous effects for the working conditions, pension obligations, or federal funding eligibility of transportation systems. Transit workers deserve a full voice and vote at the table, especially when it is their work that this commission is discussing.

Add the following language to Page 2, Line Four, moving all current language down:

"(5) Two transportation labor representatives appointed by the Maryland State & DC AFL-CIO."

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 1072 with the amendments provided.

HB1072 - TSO - MTC - LOI_FINAL.pdf

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO



Wes Moore
Governor
Aruna Miller
Lieutenant Governor
Paul J. Wiedefeld
Secretary

March 16, 2023

The Honorable Ben Barnes
Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Room 121, House Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

Re: Letter of Information – House Bill 1072 – Task Force to Study the Reconstitution of the Maryland Transportation Commission

Dear Chair Barnes and Members of the Committee:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1072 but offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

House Bill 1072 establishes a Task Force to study the operation of the Maryland Transportation Commission (MTC) and make recommendations on possible changes to membership and responsibilities of the Commission. The MDOT Secretary is to be a member of the Task Force, and MDOT is responsible for staffing. The Task Force’s report is due by December 31, 2024.

The MTC was established in law in 1971 and serves as a body to study the State transportation system and advise the Secretary of Transportation and modal Administrators on policy and programs. It is comprised of 17 members, ten appointed by the Governor, and seven regional members that serve ex officio. The MTC meets monthly. It should be noted that those serving on the MTC require necessary expertise to approve modal plans, the Consolidated Transportation Program, and other transportation related plans and policies.

For MDOT to staff the Task Force, additional resources would be necessary, estimated to be \$100,000 for Fiscal Year (FY) 24 and FY 25.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating House Bill 1072.

Respectfully submitted,

Heather Murphy
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