



James Torrence, J.D.
Seventh District,
Baltimore City Council

100 Holliday Street, Room 521, Baltimore Maryland 21202 |410-396-4810

February 28, 2023

Dear Honorable Members of The House Appropriations Committee:

House Bill 0673 – Maryland Transit Administration – Fare Price Requirements – Alterations

Good afternoon, Mr. Chairman and the honorable committee members. I am writing in support of House Bill 0673 – Maryland Transit Administration – Fare Price Requirements – Alterations. This legislation, sponsored by Delegate Mark Edelson of Baltimore City would prohibit the Maryland Transit Administration from increasing fares for low and fixed-income residents.

The North Ave station is the second most used transit route in Baltimore City. Residents throughout West Baltimore depend on the bus and light rail to access jobs, education, healthcare, and more. The Mondawmin MTA station is the most used transfer point in Baltimore's transit system and is set to undergo major upgrades to improve accessibility and revamp its infrastructure. Additionally, the Complete Streets design of Druid Park Lake Drive along with the large-scale investment in Druid Hill Park are more signs of increased connectivity throughout West Baltimore. Revitalizing our transportation systems equitably is crucial to achieving economic growth and improving the quality of life for our most vulnerable residents.

More than 90% of MTA riders earn less than \$50,000 and an increase in fares would discourage many of my constituents from using public transit. This bill as drafted would safeguard residents from further inflationary burdens. The last thing low and fixed-income residents need is a hike in transportation fares given the overall rise in fees for basic necessities such as groceries, gas, and cost of living. House Bill 0673 is an opportunity to uplift residents who already deal with a lack of resources in their immediate community.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I ask the committee to render a favorable report for House Bill 0673.

Sincerely,

James Torrence
Baltimore City Council, District 7