

TONY BRIDGES
Legislative District 41
Baltimore City

Appropriations Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

To: The Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee
From: Delegate Tony Bridges, Legislative District 41
Re: **Support** - House Bill 491 - Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - Establishment
Date: February 21, 2023

Good afternoon, Chair Barnes, and members of the Appropriations Committee,
In July 2022, Baltimore Metropolitan Council Board of Directors established the Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Workgroup with the objective of preparing recommendations regarding the management of transit in the Baltimore region. The Workgroup held four meetings from September to December 2022 and based their work on the Baltimore Regional Transit Board's extensive 2021 analysis of this issue. The Workgroup considered the alternatives from the original study and compared peer state and regional transit entities.

The Workgroup ultimately developed consensus around a set of five recommendations for timely action by our local governments, the Maryland General Assembly, and the Moore-Miller administration. One of those is the formal study of the creation of a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority.

House Bill 491 will establish a two-year legislative commission that will conduct a comprehensive study of a Baltimore Regional Transportation Authority. This Commission (1) will define the purpose and goals of the transit authority in order to better serve communities and support economic development, (2) outline the specific powers and responsibilities of the transit authority, (3) identify potential funding sources, (4) identify impacts to existing labor and service contracts, (5) reflect input from local jurisdiction members, (6) consider impacts on existing transit systems/agencies, and (7) ensure compliance with relevant federal, state, and local laws/regulations.

This study will allow the legislative commission to make an accurate recommendation to Federal, State, and local governments and partners on how/if an authority should be pursued to best serve Baltimore. This commission will be comprised of state and local government and community leaders and would commence on July 1st, 2023, and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by October 31st of 2024.

I ask the Committee for a favorable report on House Bill 491.