



# MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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**HB 794 - Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - Establishment  
House Appropriations Committee  
February 21, 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 794 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.

Following the recommendations of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's Regional Transit Governance and Funding Workgroup, HB 794 creates a Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC). Representatives from ATU Local 1300 and ATU International fully participated in this study process. The BRTC provides oversight and local input on the Maryland Transit Administration's policies regarding operating and capital budget requests for bus, light rail, metro, commuter bus, MARC service, and paratransit in the Baltimore region.

We believe that the language on Page 3, Line 1, "*One nonvoting member who is an employee of the Administration and is a member of the largest labor union in the Baltimore region, designated by the labor union.*" is confusing and potentially undermines its intent of providing representation to ATU Local 1300. If the goal is to provide non-voting representation to transit worker labor representatives, then the bill should follow past practices and say, "*One nonvoting member of a Baltimore area transportation labor organization, designated by the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO.*" This language borrows from 2022's HB 141 which created an advisory committee on transit equity but was vetoed by Governor Hogan. As currently written, it implies that the appointee would have to work at MTA and be a member of the largest union in the Baltimore region, which may not be ATU Local 1300. HB 794 also calls on the BRTC to convene subcommittees to gather feedback, information, and suggestions from nonprofits, civic organizations, employers, and transit riders. Frontline transit workers must be included as well. We propose adding, "*the Administration's frontline transit workers,*" to Section (G) (10) on Page 5, Line 10, following "*nonprofit organizations,*" and before "*civic foundations.*"

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 794 with the amendments provided.