



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

March 1, 2023

The Honorable Guy Guzzone
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
3 West, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

RE: Letter of Support – Senate Bill 617 – Maryland Transit Administration – Fare Price Requirements – Alterations

Dear Chair Guzzone and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) supports Senate Bill 617 as it allows the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to adapt to changing conditions and serve its customers more equitably and effectively.

Under current law, MTA has been required to increase base fare prices beginning in Fiscal Year 2015. Specifically, law requires that fares be adjusted every two years for core services (Bus, Metro, Light Rail, and Mobility) and every five years for commuter services (MARC, Commuter Bus) based on the annual Consumer Price Index (CPI) increase and other factors. Senate Bill 617 repeals this statutory requirement.

The MTA's most recent rider survey found that over 50 percent of core bus riders earn less than \$25,000 per year and under 20 percent have access to a private vehicle. Senate Bill 617 would enable the Administration to make equitable fare decisions and ensure access for as many riders as possible. Additionally, Senate Bill 617 protects the public interest and keeps the current requirements that public input be considered before any fare increase (or decrease) occurs. Delegating fare price decisions back to MTA will allow for a more efficient, adaptable, and equitable fare pricing system for transit riders in Maryland.

For these reasons, the Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee grant Senate Bill 617 a favorable report.

Respectfully submitted,

Holly Arnold
Administrator
Maryland Transit Administration
410-767-3943

Pilar Helm
Director of Government Affairs
Maryland Department of Transportation
410-865-1090