

Delegate Lewis Sponsor Testimony HB1027.pdf

Uploaded by: Delegate Robbyn Lewis

Position: FAV

ROBBYN LEWIS
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Health and Government Operations
Committee

Subcommittees

Health Occupations and Long Term Care

Public Health and Minority
Health Disparities

House Chair

Joint Committee on Program Open Space
and Agricultural Land Preservation

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**Testimony in Support of HB1027 - Vehicle Laws - Bus Lane Monitoring Systems -
Statewide Expansion**

February 24, 2023

Thank You Chair Barve, Vice-Chair Stein, and members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, I am Delegate Robbyn Lewis testifying on behalf of HB1027, which will deliver better bus service throughout Maryland.

This is enabling legislation that allows the Maryland Department of Transportation to deliver better bus service by enforcing, or “protecting” dedicated bus lanes statewide. Driving or stopping in a dedicated bus lane is prohibited - except under specific conditions, such as right turns - and subject to penalty. Protecting dedicated bus lanes like this leads to quicker, more reliable service.

If this sounds familiar, it's because HB1027 expands on an innovative local bill that this Committee passed last year: HB53 enabled the Baltimore City Department of Transportation that established bus lane monitoring systems in statute, and authorized that agency to use recorded images captured by automated camera technology to enforce dedicated bus lanes. That bill was enacted and became effective in October 2022. (In a separate bill that this Committee also passed, we further enabled the city to plow those bus lane enforcement back into the local complete streets program in a separate bill, creating a virtuous circle of investment in improved transit and walkability.)

Why focus on bus service? Because despite its humble status, it is the transit system workhorse. It is a lifeline for millions of Marylanders, who depend on it everyday: front-line health care workers, seniors, state employees, folks with disabilities, students. They deserve fast, reliable, better bus service.

In addition, the bus is also key to reaching our climate goals. The [transportation sector is the leading contributor](#) of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, generating It also consumes the most fossil fuel. Most emissions come from privately-owned personal vehicles and light-duty trucks,

although of course there has been some [decline](#) in GHG due to the advent of electric and hybrid vehicles. And while bus transit contributes far less GHG than private vehicles, we have the potential to lure more folks out of their cars and onto the bus if we improve bus service.

While the 2022 bill enables automated enforcement using stationary cameras, I believe that the future belongs to on-board, bus-mounted cameras. However, the use of such cameras requires statewide enabling legislation.

To that end, I would like to bring proposed amendments to the Committee's attention. These are still being drafted, but I will describe them. First, working closely with MDOT, I have considered and accepted a number of amendments that will establish workgroups to, firstly, determine the costs and benefits of on-board camera enforcement, and secondly, to make recommendations on effective curb side management on dedicated bus lanes.

You will hear testimony from the Washington Metropolitan Area Transportation Authority (WMATA) about their implementation of on-board bus lane enforcement, and from a company that creates this technology that is currently being used in Washington DC, Philadelphia and other cities.

By improving the quality of bus services in Maryland, we are changing hundreds of thousands of lives. For those reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB1027.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'R. Lewis', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Delegate Robbyn Lewis

District 46, Baltimore City

Maryland House of Delegates

6 Bladen St. Room 424

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MoCo Wenger

Uploaded by: Melanie Wenger

Position: FAV



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

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HB 1027

DATE: March 2, 2023

SPONSOR: Delegate R. Lewis

ASSIGNED TO: Environment and Transportation

CONTACT PERSON: Melanie Wenger (melanie.wenger@montgomerycountymd.gov)

POSITION: Support (Department of Transportation)

Vehicle Laws – Bus Lane Monitoring Systems – Statewide Expansion

The Montgomery County Department of Transportation (MCDOT) strongly supports House Bill 1027, which would expand to all local jurisdictions in the State the authority currently only granted to Baltimore City to use bus lane monitoring systems. Bus lane monitoring systems are used to capture a recorded image of the driver of a motor vehicle if a violation is being committed. Under House Bill 1027, a local law enforcement agency or a contractor would be permitted to operate a bus lane monitoring system.

State roads in Montgomery County have the highest Metrobus ridership in Maryland and there are plans to install bus lanes along several of these roads this year, including along Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring and University Boulevard in the Wheaton/Four Corners area. Bus lanes will also be added as part of the County new bus rapid transit (BRT) FLASH bus service along the Germantown Transit Center and US 29. With the expansion of the County's bus lanes, MCDOT supports House Bill 1027 as a useful tool to ensure the effectiveness and safety of bus lanes within the State.

Enabling the use of bus lane monitoring systems would help ensure public transit reliability and performance, thus encouraging transit ridership. The County's ability to utilize bus lane monitoring systems under House Bill 1027 would be a critical step to supporting successful implementation of bus lanes in the near term in addition to supporting the County's extensive plans for BRT over the longer term. MCDOT respectfully requests the Committee issue a favorable report on House Bill 1027 to enable all local jurisdictions to utilize bus lane monitoring systems.

HB1027-ET_MACo_SUP.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Sample

Position: FAV



House Bill 1027

Vehicle Laws – Bus Lane Monitoring Systems – Statewide Expansion

MACo Position: **SUPPORT**

To: Environment and Transportation
Committee

Date: March 2, 2023

From: Sarah Sample

The Maryland Association of Counties (MACo) **SUPPORTS** HB 1027. This bill would allow counties to install and manage bus lane monitoring systems, and clarify their authority to allow other types of vehicles to use the bus lanes as they see fit.

HB 1027 is enabling legislation, providing counties with an additional tool in maintaining motor vehicle compliance and safety in neighborhoods and communities. This opportunity also helps counties enhance the reliability and safety of public transportation for residents. In addition to the enhanced security and order these programs help local governments provide, they also help to support other public safety measures that keep these communities thriving. With an automated option for enforcing motor vehicle laws and violations, there is great potential to divert costs associated with law enforcement personnel who would typically be tasked with motor vehicle monitoring. These savings can be reinvested in other areas, while maintaining compliance and calming neighborhoods via the automated monitoring system.

Counties welcome the additional means to provide the accommodations necessary to maintain safe streets and dependable transportation for all and doing so in a way that is sensitive to the constant demands on taxpayer dollars and county budgets. For these reasons, MACo urges a **FAVORABLE** report for HB 1027.

HB1027_CharlieScott_favwa.pdf

Uploaded by: Charlie Scott

Position: FWA



WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Public Testimony in Support of HB1027

Vehicle Laws – Bus Lane Monitoring Systems – Statewide Expansion

Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee

March 2, 2023

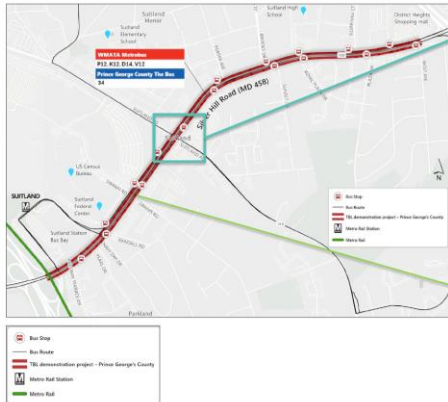
Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. For the record, my name is Charlie Scott and I am the Senior Government Relations Officer for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). I am here to urge your strong support for House Bill 1027.

At Metro, we are preparing to launch a program, in partnership with the District of Columbia, to begin automated enforcement of bus lane and bus stop parking violations later this year. A portion of our bus fleet will be equipped with cameras to detect and record vehicles that are blocking bus lanes or bus stops. Warnings or tickets will be issued by the District of Columbia.

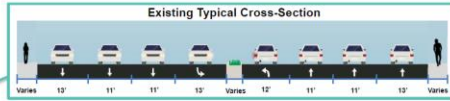
Our focus, of course, is on improving the experience for our bus customers and we know that on-time performance is one of the key factors in improving customer satisfaction. The ability for our buses to make full use of dedicated bus lanes will improve reliability, making bus service in these corridors even more attractive to new customers.

Ideally, we would like to extend these customer service improvements across the region, and HB1027 is key to enabling this to occur. While dedicated bus lanes are more prevalent in the District of Columbia, we are making strides to extend such bus corridor improvements in Prince George's and Montgomery County. For the past year, our staff has worked in coordination with MDOT SHA on plans to implement targeted areas of dedicated bus lanes on Silver Hill Road in Suitland and Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring. In fact, just earlier this week, WMATA submitted a federal RAISE grant application to the Federal Transit Administration seeking funding for these and associated improvements in these corridors.

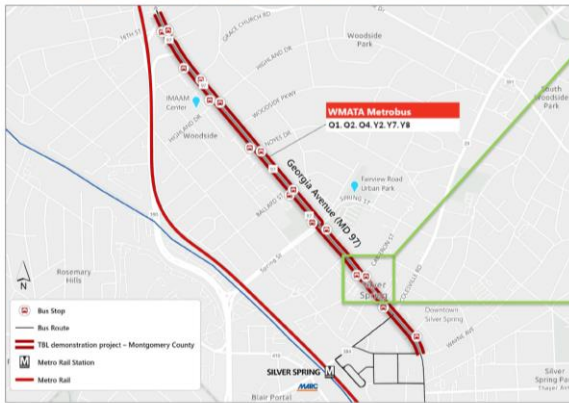
Silver Hill Road (MD 458)



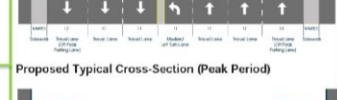
4 Suitland Metrorail Station to West Avenue



Georgia Avenue (MD 97)



6 16th Street to Wayne Avenue



To maximize the benefits of these investments, it is critical to have the best mechanisms in place to enforce parking restrictions and increase bus reliability in these corridors. Additionally, with further amendments to provide enforcement of parking restrictions at bus stops, this legislation will have benefits beyond corridors with dedicated bus lanes. Across the region, our jurisdictions have made investments to ensure that bus stops are ADA-accessible, so enabling enforcement of parking restrictions at bus stops will have direct benefits for customers with specific mobility needs.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to provide a favorable report to HB1027, as amended, and thank Delegate Lewis for her sponsorship of this important legislation.

HB 1027_FWA_CMTA&Bikemore.pdf

Uploaded by: Eric Norton

Position: FWA



**Transportation
Alliance**



Bikemore

March 2, 2023

**Testimony on HB 1027 –
Vehicle Laws – Bus Lane Monitoring Systems – Statewide Expansion
Environment & Transportation**

Position: Favorable With Amendments

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance and Bikemore support HB 1027, with a suggested amendment to expand monitoring options.

Bus lanes can be an effective tool to move people more efficiently through our most crowded and economically productive corridors. Public education and enforcement are critical to the effectiveness of dedicated bus lanes. But bus riders regularly report that lanes are blocked by parked or standing cars and trucks. At the Transportation Alliance we recruited volunteers and conducted observations of bus lanes in fall 2018. During our observations 25% of the time a car or truck was parked in any given block of a bus lane. Buses are forced to merge into general travel lanes, causing delays and disrupting schedules.

However, better and consistent enforcement should reduce incidents of cars or trucks stopped or standing in bus lanes, lower travel times for bus trips, improve reliability for scheduled bus arrivals, and move more people per hour through our busiest corridors. A recent study from New York City shows camera enforcement on bus lanes increased bus speeds by up to 34% and increased ridership by up to 20%.

A potential way to expand monitoring and enforcement options would be to amend the bill to include transit agencies themselves or their police forces, such as MTA Police, as entities that could choose to operate bus lane monitoring systems.