

# **CE Ball 2023 - SB 876 Baltimore Regional Transit C**

Uploaded by: County Executive Calvin Ball

Position: FAV



## HOWARD COUNTY OFFICE OF COUNTY EXECUTIVE

3430 Courthouse Drive ■ Ellicott City, Maryland 21043 ■ 410-313-2013 Voice/Relay

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive  
cball@howardcountymd.gov

www.howardcountymd.gov  
FAX 410-313-3051

March 15, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
Miller Senate Office Building, 3 East  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: **TESTIMONY OF SUPPORT**: SB 876 – Baltimore Regional Transit Commission – Establishment

Dear Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee,

Howard County SUPPORTS Senate Bill 876 Baltimore Regional Transit Commission – Establishment. I commend Senator Washington in her proposal of this bill which will establish the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission to review and approve annual budget requests of the Maryland Transit Administration.

Senate Bill 876 arose from the work of BMC's Transit Governance and Funding Workgroup. Last year, the General Assembly passed HB1336 which formed a legislative commission to study the governance and funding of MTA. That bill was vetoed by Governor Hogan. BMC formed this workgroup last July to address the issues raised in HB1336. Members were appointed from four of our jurisdictions, as well as the legislature, the business community and labor. The ideas in these bills represent the collective ideas of a cross section of regional leaders and they come from a truly regional and collaborative process. As Chair of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council Board and on behalf Mayor Scott, County Executive Olszewski, and County Executive Pittman I am proud to offer the support of our local governments for this legislation.

All our communities expect bold leadership from elected representatives, but they also expect a voice in deliberative, transparent, and accountable decision-making process. The cancellation of the Red Line blocked funding, growth and opportunity that would have helped firm up the economic foundation of communities in the Baltimore region for decades to come. Our system here in Maryland allowed this decision to go unchecked. The oversight structure outlined in these bills would provide an important guardrail, with stakeholders from communities across the region building consensus on all major transit decisions. Local communities have a seat at the table at every successful transit agency in the country. We've fallen behind, but it's not too late. These bills provide a path for setting a new standard in transit governance and finally delivering for our communities on this.

I welcome your support and urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 876.

All the Best,

Calvin Ball  
Howard County Executive

# **SB876 Econ Action Testimony 2023.pdf**

Uploaded by: Isadora Stern

Position: FAV



**Testimony to the Senate Finance Committee**  
**SB876: Baltimore Regional Transit Commission – Establishment**  
**Position: Favorable**

March 15, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith, Chair  
Senate Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Cc: Members, Senate Finance Committee

Honorable Chair Griffith and Members of the Committee:

Economic Action Maryland (formerly the Maryland Consumer Rights Coalition) is a people-centered movement to expand economic rights, housing justice, and community reinvestment for working families, low-income communities, and communities of color. Economic Action Maryland provides direct assistance today while passing legislation and regulations to create systemic change in the future.

We are here in support of SB876. The bill seeks to establish a commission to reform the way public transportation is governed and financed. Structural challenges in the current centralized governance structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) make maintaining and improving transit performance difficult. The result is an unreliable public transportation system that further disadvantages many users already negatively impacted by poverty and structural racism, discourages ridership growth and puts the region at a competitive disadvantage compared to other metropolitan areas with robust, reliable public transit.

Baltimore City has the most expensive auto insurance of any county in Maryland. These high costs make it extremely difficult for low-income families to reach high paying jobs. Without a car and with a limited public transit system, it is nearly impossible to achieve economic mobility. In 2019, Maryland ranked among the bottom ten states for quality of state transportation infrastructure.<sup>1</sup> Even in regions with strong transit systems, many low-income families have trouble reaching jobs for which they are qualified. Some are forced to turn down good positions in favor of lower paying ones with transit access.

The lack of local participation in planning and funding decisions has been a contributing factor to ongoing maintenance problems (MTA buses and trains have some of the highest breakdown rates in the nation) and lack of significant expansion or improvement (last expansion of the system was in 1997). Of the 50 largest transit agencies in the country, the MTA is the only one that is part of a state department of transportation without a board of directors and where decision-making lies solely with a governor.

SB876 creates a governance and funding commission composed of regional and state stakeholders to oversee and approve administration and budgets, exercise oversight of and engage in advocacy for the Baltimore Region public transit systems maintained by the MVA, and engage the public and other nonprofit and civic foundations in the process. We believe that reforming the current system and

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.usnews.com/news/best-states/rankings/infrastructure/transportation>



**ECONOMIC  
ACTION MD**

creating the commission is a critical step for improving and expanding transit service, increasing oversight and accountability, and bringing additional local and federal funds for transit to the region.

For these reasons, we support SB876 and urge a favorable report.

Best,  
Isadora Stern  
Policy Manager

# **Baltimore's Transit Future support for BMC Transit**

Uploaded by: John Hillegass

Position: FAV

# BALTIMORE'S TRANSIT FUTURE

March 14, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee

***Re: Support for Senate Bills 0465, 0876, & 0875 | House Bills 0491, 0794, & 1072  
The Commission to Study Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority; The Establishment of  
the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission; & The Task Force to Study the Reconstitution of the  
Maryland Transportation Commission***

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members,

On behalf of the signatories listed below, we are writing to express our support for Senate Bills 0465, 0876, & 0875 and cross-filed House Bills 0491, 0794, & 1072. The package of bills that we support are the recommendations of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's (BMC) Baltimore Regional Transit Funding and Governance Workgroup (Workgroup) that was tasked with developing strategies to empower and strengthen transit in the Baltimore region – a goal that the Baltimore's Transit Future coalition firmly supports.

The BMC Workgroup met over the second half of 2022 to examine the governance and funding structure of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) and locally operated transit systems to develop options for increased equity, transparency, and regional decision making in the distribution of funds and transit project prioritization in the Baltimore region. The Workgroup included elected officials, business, public-sector, labor leaders, and technical experts from around the Baltimore metropolitan region. Their work culminated in a [final report](#) and legislative recommendations. The package of bills is outlined below:

- **Senate Bill 0465 | House Bill 0491** would create a commission to study the establishment of a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority (BRTA) as the Baltimore region is the only large metropolitan area in the nation whose transit is operated by a state agency without oversight of any board or commission. The commission would complete its work on or before October 31, 2024.
- **Senate Bill 0876 | House Bill 0794** would establish a Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC), as a regional authority is being studied, to create a formal mechanism for a state-local collaboration into how the local and regional transit network is planned, built, operated and funded.
- **Senate Bill 0875 | House Bill 1072** would establish a Task Force to study the reconstitution of the Maryland Transportation Commission (MTC) to provide the group the authority to provide oversight and transparency into the state's Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) development. The intention of this change is to increase engagement and transparency around statewide transportation funding allocations and long-range plans, which is currently opaque. The Task Force would complete its work on or before December 31, 2024.

# BALTIMORE'S TRANSIT FUTURE

The lack of collaboration between the state and local leaders into the planning, funding, and operations of the Baltimore region's transit system has hampered the development of a 21st century regional transit system that can adequately support inclusive economic growth, workforce development, and the needs of the region's most disenfranchised communities. Together, these bills would ensure that the governance and funding structure of Greater Baltimore's transit system are designed to be more responsive to the needs of the region's residents, businesses, and institutions.

The undersigned signatories and organizations request favorable reports for the package of bills because of their ability to strengthen regional coordination, decision making, and funding.

Sincerely,

Ballard Spahr LLP	Howard County Chamber of Commerce
Baltimore City Chamber of Commerce	Johns Hopkins University and Medicine
Baltimore Collegetown Network	Kaiser Permanente
Baltimore MARC Riders	Mahogany, Inc.
CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield	MedStar Health
Central Maryland Transportation Alliance	PNC
EcoMap Technologies	Tradepoint Atlantic
Greater Baltimore Committee	Transit Choices
Greater Washington Partnership	University of Maryland, Baltimore

---

## About the Baltimore's Transit Future Campaign

The [Greater Baltimore Committee](#) and [Greater Washington Partnership](#) launched the Baltimore's Transit Future campaign to call attention to the urgent business imperative and need for the Greater Baltimore region to create a world-class public transit system that helps create shared economic prosperity and catalyzes inclusive growth. Since June 2022, more than 65 business, civic, and non-profit organizations, including many of the largest employers in the State, have joined the campaign encouraging regional focus on six priorities:

1. Address the transit system's repair backlog and operator shortage.
2. Establish frequent, reliable transit service to regional job centers.
3. Support regional coordination, decision making, and funding.
4. Implement a 10-year rapid transit expansion program.
5. Prioritize regional rail investment.
6. Catalyze equitable development at transit and rail stations.

The time for action is now. The residents and businesses of Maryland's largest city and surrounding suburbs deserve a world-class transit system. These six strategic priorities will set the course for a more equitable transportation system, making the Baltimore region a more attractive place to live, work, play, and build a business.



**BaltimoreCounty\_FAV\_SB0465\_SB0876.pdf**

Uploaded by: Joshua Greenberg

Position: FAV



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.  
*County Executive*

JENNIFER AIOSA  
*Director of Government Affairs*

AMANDA KONTZ CARR  
*Legislative Officer*

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG  
*Associate Director of Government Affairs*

**BILL NO.:** SB 465 / SB 876

**TITLE:** Transportation – Commission to Study Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority

Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - Establishment

**SPONSOR:** Senator M. Washington

**COMMITTEE:** Appropriations

**POSITION:** SUPPORT

**DATE:** March 1, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 465 – Transportation – Commission to Study Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority, as well SB 876. Senate Bill 465 would establish a Commission to Study Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority. Senate Bill 876 Would establish the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission to perform oversight and advocacy duties related to Baltimore region transit services.

Baltimore County is the third most populous jurisdiction in Maryland, home to more than 850,000 residents. Many of our residents work elsewhere in the region, and many rely on safe, efficient, and reliable regional transit. Unfortunately, Baltimore County, like other local jurisdictions in the Baltimore Region have limited control on how State transit serves our residents. For example, roughly 40% of the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) local bus lines serve Baltimore County, but the County has no input in what those routes look like.

The local jurisdictions of the Baltimore Region need to be part of the discussions regarding how regional transit needs are met. SBs 465 and 876 would afford Baltimore County and neighboring jurisdictions a seat at the table. SB 465 would create a commission to undertake a comprehensive evaluation of establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority. This group would be tasked with studying a full range of considerations related to formally changing the operations, planning, governance, and financing of a regional authority, and find answers to legitimate questions regarding the creation of such an authority. Last year, HB 1336, a similar bill to create a commission to evaluate the findings of the 2021 Baltimore Regional Transit Governance and Funding Study, was a Baltimore County priority.

SB 876 is a complimentary bill that would establish a Baltimore Regional Transit Commission, staffed by the existing Baltimore Metropolitan Committee (BMC) to review and provide feedback on State transit planning and engage transit stakeholders and residents who rely on transit services in such feedback to the State. This Commission could begin its cross-jurisdictional efforts in 2023, and formally give our jurisdictions a role in planning and operation of the transit that serves our residents, while the longer-term issues related to potentially changing the governance authority is thoroughly investigated.

The Baltimore Region is a hub of economic activity, cultural resources, and recreational offerings and is home to and visited by millions. Our residents, businesses, and visitors deserve high quality, safe and efficient transit now and into the future.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 465/SB 846. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at [jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov](mailto:jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov).

**SB0876 TRANSIT COMMISSION Testimony FINAL.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mike Kelly

Position: FAV



## Testimony Presented to the Senate Finance Committee

### SB0876 - Transportation –Baltimore Regional Transit Commission – Establishment

Sponsor: Senator Washington

#### Position: Favorable

This testimony is submitted by the members of the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's Transit Governance and Funding Workgroup (TGFW). The TGFW was appointed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Council's Board of Directors to identify meaningful recommendations to develop a more effective and inclusive regional transit system in the Baltimore region. The TGFW met from August through December, 2022. We are pleased to support SB0876.

*Please note that this legislation works in concert with SB0465, which authorizes a formal study of a standalone transit authority for the Baltimore region. SB0465 was heard by Appropriations. These bills mirror two of the recommendations from our report published in January 2023.*

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) is the nation's only large transit agency that is not governed by a board, commission or council. Over time, this structure has allowed for little accountability; fostered disinvestment in the system; and allowed for the cancellation of the Red Line with no input from the residents and local governments of the Baltimore region.

Further, the lack of coordination between state and local government plans regarding transit, land use, economic development - and even traffic operations - have resulted in a system that is not aligned with providing convenient and equitable connections for riders to regional job centers, schools, recreational activities and healthcare facilities.

These bills, intended to work in concert, will establish a working partnership between State and Local government and help our region develop a world-class system that best serves the needs of current and future transit riders. SB0876 establishes a regional transit commission to implement much needed public accountability for public transportation in our region. SB0465 brings appropriate State and Local government parties to the table to consider whether transit in Baltimore should remain a function of the State or move to an independent agency.

**SB0876** would create an immediate partnership between State and Local government and provide much needed public accountability by creating a targeted and limited governing structure over MTA. The BRTC will have two limited, but specifically targeted powers. (1) Approval of the MTA's budget for Baltimore's core service area, to ensure necessary and appropriate funding. (2)



Approval of the Central Maryland Regional Transit Plan implementation and updates - to make sure we are maintaining the system and planning for the future. The BRTC gives local government a formal voice in transit, as a partner to MTA, for the first time in over 50 years.

**SB0465** is the definitive study of whether the Baltimore region should have an independent transit authority. This question has been the subject of conversation since the cancellation of the Red Line. While an authority offers many benefits, there are complex questions that must be answered before undertaking such a substantial step. Issues such as financial considerations, current labor and service contracts, ownership of physical assets, board structure must be considered before determining whether any gained benefits are worth the potential risks and costs. Commencing this study now, within the term of the new administration, provides an opportunity to act on any recommendations and next steps resulting from this study.

Together, these bills would provide a transformational opportunity to include local voices, coordinate transit and land use decisions, and better meet the needs of current and future riders throughout the greater Baltimore region.

We strongly encourage **FAVORABLE** report for **SB0876**. Thank you for your consideration.

#### **BMC TRANSIT GOVERNANCE AND FUNDING WORKGROUP MEMBERS**

**Tony Bridges**, Maryland State Delegate, Baltimore City, District 41

**Dr. Celeste Chavis**, Associate Professor of Transportation and Urban Infrastructure Studies, Morgan State University

**Andrew Gena**, Director of Strategic Research, Amalgamated Transit Union AFL-CIO/CLC

**Tasha Gresham-James**, Executive Director, Dundalk Renaissance

**Ron Hartman**, Senior Consultant, WSP USA

**Jon Laria**, Managing Partner, Ballard Spahr

**Michael McMillan**, President & Business Agent, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300

**Tony Scott**, Associate Director for Project Management, Baltimore Mayor's Office of Infrastructure

**Samuel Snead**, Director, Anne Arundel County Department of Transportation

**Aaron Tomarchio**, Executive Vice President of Corporate Affairs, Tradepoint Atlantic

**Adrea Turner**, Chief of Staff, Urban Institute

**D'Andrea Walker**, Acting Director, Baltimore County Department of Public Works & Transportation

**Mary Washington**, Maryland State Senator, Baltimore City, District 43

# **SB876-Amendment 513421**

Uploaded by: Senator Mary Washington

Position: FAV



SB0876/513421/1

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

08 MAR 23  
09:05:30

BY: Senator M. Washington  
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 876  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 4, strike “approve” and substitute “comment on”; in line 5, after “and” insert “certain”; and strike beginning with “on” in line 5 down through “repair” in line 6.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 5, strike “**FOUR**” and substitute “**THREE**”; in line 11, strike “**TWO**” and substitute “**THREE**”; in line 13, strike “**FIVE**” and substitute “**FOUR**”; in line 15, strike “**THREE**” and substitute “**TWO**”; in line 23, strike “**THE FOLLOWING TWO MEMBERS**” and substitute “**ONE MEMBER**”; strike beginning with “**APPOINTED**” in line 24 down through “**BY**” in line 26 and substitute “**JOINTLY APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR AND**”; and in line 28, strike “**THE FOLLOWING TWO MEMBERS**” and substitute “**ONE MEMBER**”;

On pages 2 and 3, strike beginning with “**APPOINTED**” in line 29 on page 2 down through “**BY**” in line 2 on page 3 and substitute “**JOINTLY APPOINTED BY THE GOVERNOR AND**”.

On page 3, in line 3, strike “**AND**”; strike beginning with “**LARGEST**” in line 5 down through “**REGION**” in line 6 and substitute “**AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL LABOR UNION**”; in line 6, after “**UNION**” insert “**; AND**”

**(8) THE SECRETARY, OR THE SECRETARY’S DESIGNEE, WHO SHALL VOTE ONLY IN THE CASE OF A TIE**”;



and in line 22, after “COMMISSION” insert “, INCLUDING FUNDING FOR ONE SENIOR PLANNER AND TWO JUNIOR PLANNER STAFFING POSITIONS”.

On page 4, in line 14, strike “STATE OF GOOD REPAIR” and substitute “CAPITAL NEEDS INVENTORY”; in line 16, after “ARTICLE;” insert “AND”; strike beginning with “ANY” in line 17 down through “(IV)” in line 18; in line 25, strike “EXERCISE OVERSIGHT OF” and substitute “PROVIDE INPUT”; and in line 28, strike “REVIEW ANY REPORT PREPARED BY OR FOR” and substitute “REQUEST AND REVIEW INFORMATION FROM THE ANNUAL ATTAINMENT REPORT AND”.

On page 5, strike beginning with “TRANSPORTATION” in line 4 down through “ADMINISTRATION” in line 6 and substitute “MAJOR SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSALS”; in line 7, strike “APPROVE” and substitute “COMMENT ON”; in line 10, after “PARATRANSIT” insert “, AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT AND FINAL CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM”; strike beginning with “CONVENE” in line 11 down through “(12)” in line 20; strike in their entirety lines 22 and 23; in line 24, strike “(14)” and substitute “(11)”; strike beginning with “APPROVE” in line 24 down through “REPAIR” in line 25 and substitute “COMMENT ON THE CAPITAL NEEDS INVENTORY REPORT”; and in line 26, strike “(15)” and substitute “(12)”.

On page 6, in line 10, strike “two” and substitute “three”; in line 11, strike “one member” and substitute “two members”; in line 13, strike “four” and substitute “three”; in line 14, strike the first “two members” and substitute “one member”; in line 19, strike “three” and substitute “two”; in line 20, strike “two members” and substitute “one member”; in line 22, after the first “County” insert “jointly”; in the same line, after “appointed” insert “by the Governor and”; strike beginning with the first “the” in line 24 down through “(7)” in line 26; in line 26, after the first “County” insert “jointly”; in the same line, after “appointed” insert “by the Governor and”; in line 27, strike “4” and

substitute “3”; strike in their entirety lines 28 and 29; and in lines 30 and 32, strike “(9)” and “(10)”, respectively, and substitute “(7)” and “(8)”, respectively.

# **SB876-Amendment 513725**

Uploaded by: Senator Mary Washington

Position: FAV



SB0876/513725/1

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

14 MAR 23  
18:18:37

BY: Senator M. Washington  
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO SENATE BILL 876  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 4, strike “approve” and substitute “comment on”; in line 5, after “and” insert “certain”; and strike beginning with “on” in line 5 down through “repair” in line 6.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, in line 5, strike “**FOUR**” and substitute “**THREE**”; in line 11, strike “**TWO**” and substitute “**THREE**”; in line 13, strike “**FIVE**” and substitute “**FOUR**”; and in line 15, strike “**THREE**” and substitute “**TWO**”.

On page 3, in line 1, strike “**AND**”; strike beginning with “**LARGEST**” in line 5 down through “**REGION**” in line 6 and substitute “**AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION LOCAL LABOR UNION**”; in line 6, after “**UNION**” insert “**;****AND**”

**(8) THE SECRETARY OR THE SECRETARY’S DESIGNEE, WHO SHALL VOTE ONLY IN THE CASE OF A TIE**”;

and in line 22, after “**COMMISSION**” insert “**, INCLUDING FUNDING FOR ONE SENIOR PLANNER AND TWO JUNIOR PLANNER STAFFING POSITIONS**”.

On page 4, in line 14, strike “**STATE OF GOOD REPAIR**” and substitute “**CAPITAL NEEDS INVENTORY**”; in line 16, after “**ARTICLE;**” insert “**AND**”; strike beginning with “**ANY**” in line 17 down through “**(IV)**” in line 18; in line 25, strike “**EXERCISE OVERSIGHT OF**” and substitute “**PROVIDE INPUT**”; and in line 28, strike

“**REVIEW ANY REPORT PREPARED BY OR FOR**” and substitute “**REQUEST AND REVIEW INFORMATION FROM THE ANNUAL ATTAINMENT REPORT AND**”.

On page 5, strike beginning with “**TRANSPORTATION**” in line 4 down through “**ADMINISTRATION**” in line 6 and substitute “**SERVICE CHANGE REPORTS AND MAJOR SERVICE CHANGE PROPOSALS ON A QUARTERLY BASIS**”; in line 7, strike “**APPROVE**” and substitute “**COMMENT ON**”; in line 10, after “**PARATRANSIT**” insert “**AS PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE DRAFT AND FINAL CONSOLIDATED TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM**”; strike beginning with “**CONVENE**” in line 11 down through “**(12)**” in line 20; strike in their entirety lines 22 and 23; in line 24, strike “**(14)**” and substitute “**(11)**”; strike beginning with “**APPROVE**” in line 24 down through “**REPAIR**” in line 25 and substitute “**COMMENT ON THE CAPITAL NEEDS INVENTORY REPORT**”; and in line 26, strike “**(15)**” and substitute “**(12)**”.

On page 6, in line 10, strike “two” and substitute “three”; in line 11, strike “one member” and substitute “two members”; in line 13, strike “four” and substitute “three”; in line 14, strike the first “two members” and substitute “one member”; in line 19, strike “three” and substitute “two”; in line 20, strike “two members” and substitute “one member”; in line 23, strike “4” and substitute “3”; and in line 25, strike “3” and substitute “4”.

# **SB876-Amendment 783827**

Uploaded by: Senator Mary Washington

Position: FAV



**SB0876/783827/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

10 FEB 23  
14:25:37

BY: Senator M. Washington  
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 876

(First Reading File Bill)

On pages 1 and 2, strike in their entirety the lines beginning with line 20 on page 1 through line 2 on page 2, inclusive.

On page 2, in lines 3, 13, 23, and 28, strike “**(3)**”, “**(4)**”, “**(5)**”, and “**(6)**”, respectively, and substitute “**(1)**”, “**(2)**”, “**(3)**”, and “**(4)**”, respectively.

On page 3, in line 4, strike “**(7)**” and substitute “**(5)**”.

**Anne Arundel County\_FAV\_SB876.pdf**

Uploaded by: Steuart Pittman

Position: FAV





March 15, 2023

**Senate Bill 876**

**Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - Establishment**

**Senate Finance Committee**

**Position: SUPPORT**

This Bill establishes the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC) to review and approve annual budget requests of the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), updates to the Central Maryland Transportation Plan, and annual reports on the Administration's state of good repair, and to perform other oversight and advocacy duties related to Baltimore region transit services. The Bill will ensure that the BRTC has limited, but specifically targeted powers, to make sure our region is asking for necessary and appropriate funding, and to make sure we are maintaining the system and planning for the future.

This Bill will give local governments a formal voice in transit for the first time in over 50 years. The MTA has been providing public transportation to connect people to jobs, schools, and other important destinations in the Baltimore region since the early 1970s. The MTA services play a critical role in the Baltimore region's transportation network by operating multiple modes of transit for commuters, helping to alleviate traffic congestion on roads, reducing air pollution, and improving overall mobility. In addition, the MTA plans and operates a network of transit service (bus, light rail, and metro services) in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Anne Arundel County. It also operates a regional commuter bus service, MARC, and paratransit service. MTA is especially important in Baltimore City, and continuing to invest in transit infrastructure will have long-term benefits for the economic and social development of our region.

Unlike WMATA, which has a board of directors, MTA's planning, budget, and investment decisions are ultimately made by the Governor and Secretary of Transportation, with support from MTA staff. This structure of decision-making without representation from local or regional stakeholders is a national outlier. Of the 35 largest transit agencies in the country, a board or commission governs all but one – MTA.

As key partners with the State, it is time for local governments to have a seat at the table as we all work together to build, expand, and maintain a regional transit system that will spur economic growth and improve the quality of life of our residents. For those reasons please give a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 876.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Steuart Pittman".

Steuart Pittman  
County Executive

# **SB 876 - Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - E**

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FWA



# MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

AFFILIATED WITH NATIONAL AFL-CIO

7 School Street • Annapolis, Maryland 21401-2096

Balto. (410) 269-1940 • Fax (410) 280-2956

*President*

Donna S. Edwards

*Secretary-Treasurer*

Gerald W. Jackson

**SB 876 - Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - Establishment  
Senate Finance Committee  
March 15, 2023**

**SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT**

**Donna S. Edwards  
President**

**Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO**

Madame Chair and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of SB 876 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, SB 876 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. SB 876 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 SB 876 with the amendments provided.

# **SB0876 - MTA - Baltimore Regional Transit Commis**

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

---

March 15, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 876 – Baltimore Regional Transit Commission - Establishment***

Dear Chair Griffith and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on Senate Bill 876 but offers the following information for the Committee's consideration. MDOT and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) look forward to continuing to work with the bill sponsor towards the common goals of this bill which include, increased transparency, collaboration, and strategic planning.

Senate Bill 876 would establish the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission to review and approve annual budget requests of the MTA, updates to the Central Maryland Regional Transportation Plan, annual reports on the Administration's state of good repair, and to perform other oversight and advocacy duties related to Baltimore region transit services. The Commission would be staffed by the Baltimore Metropolitan Commission (BMC); however, it would also require significant staff resources from MTA.

As drafted, some of the duties and responsibilities of the Commission outlined in Senate Bill 876 are duplicative of current efforts. For example, BMC staff currently participate in and review many MTA reports and planning efforts of regional significance. MTA regularly presents these efforts to the Baltimore Regional Transit Board (BRTB). The BMC also has an existing technical committee that reviews and coordinates on transit services proposed for the Baltimore region. MDOT, MTA, and BMC regularly convene efforts to gather information from transit riders and stakeholders regarding transit service in the Baltimore region.

Additionally, the draft Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) is presented annually to each jurisdiction in the State. This is drafted through inclusion of local priority letters, which are submitted beginning in April, and further comments continue to be received throughout the annual CTP Tour meetings in the fall. Lastly, in addition to MDOT submitting the Annual State Report on Transportation to the Legislature, MTA reports to the Legislature each year on its progress in implementing the Capital Needs Inventory, its progress in converting to Zero-Emission Bus, and the Capital Needs Inventory Report describing 10-year state of good repair needs and progress every three years.

The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Page Two

Senate Bill 876 requires the Commission to review and approve MTA's "annual operating and capital budget request for the Baltimore Region." It is important to note that MTA does not make an annual budget request but the MDOT Secretary establishes the budget for the entirety of the Department, including each transportation mode. The budget referenced in 2-103.1 is the Secretary's budget for the department, which is submitted to the legislature. As noted above, the CTP is currently developed through a process that involves direct jurisdictional engagement. The BRTB currently approves all budget requests for spending federal transportation funds in the Baltimore region through the region's federally required Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

The MTA is actively engaged with the bill sponsor and looks forward to continuing collaboration to address the concerns outlined above. The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information when deliberating Senate Bill 876.

Respectfully submitted,

David Myers  
Director of Governmental Affairs  
Maryland Transit Administration  
410-767-0820

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