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March 1, 2023

The Honorable William Smith, Chairman
Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

RE: SUPPORT SB693

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 600
LAWRENCE KASECAMP

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
KENZELL CRAWFORD

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHNNY WALKER

Local 1949
ERIC BILSON

As State Legislative Director for the SMART Transportation Division, I am urging your committee's support for SB693, "Transportation - Assaults on Public Transit Operators - Report."

We all recognize the importance of the vital public service the employees who would be covered under this law provide to the public. However, statistics show that these employees are increasingly being subjected to assaults as the number of reported assaults against them over the past several years continues to climb.

As we recover from the pandemic and with the improved state of the economy the use of public transit is growing. In fact, prior to the pandemic the United States experienced the highest public transit ridership in recent history. This is a good thing for our state and public transit should be promoted to grow our public transit systems even further.

It's unfortunate that the General Assembly hasn't passed legislation with a strong deterrent to address the increase in assaults and prevent these incidents from ever occurring. Although we believe the evidence is there to warrant legislation, we understand that some believe additional statistics are necessary. SB693 requires the collection of data and a report issued to hopefully provide support for future legislation to address the lack of serious consequences for these assaults.

We therefore urge your committee's **support** for SB693.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Larry".

Lawrence E. Kasecamp
MD State Legislative Director
SMART – Transportation Division