



WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Public Testimony in Support of HB107

Vehicle Laws – Bus Lane Obstruction - Monitoring Systems Expansion and Workgroup

Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee

February 1, 2024

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 107.

At Metro, we have just launched a program, in partnership with the District of Columbia, to begin automated enforcement of bus lane and bus stop parking violations. A portion of our bus fleet is now equipped with cameras to detect and record vehicles that are blocking bus lanes or bus stops. Any warnings or tickets are issued by the District of Columbia. The bus stop enforcement began in late 2023 and ticketing of vehicles in dedicated bus lanes started on Monday.

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.

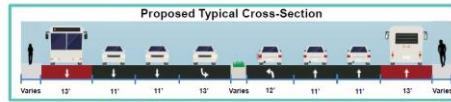
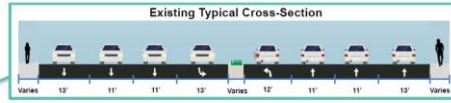
Ideally, we would like to extend these customer service improvements across the region, and HB107 is key to enabling this to occur. While dedicated bus lanes are more prevalent in the District of Columbia, we are making strides to extend such bus corridor improvements in Prince George's and Montleled last gomery County. Dedicated bus lanes along an approximately two-mile segment of University Boulevard near Wheaton will be opening in the next month. Additionally, for the past two years, 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. 100% design for these project areas was completed last week.

Silver Hill Road (MD 458)



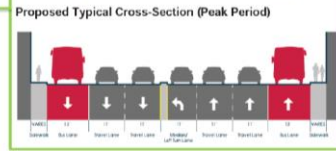
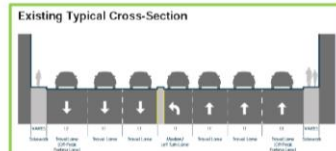
4 Suitland Metrorail Station to West Avenue



Georgia Avenue (MD 97)



8 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, 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.

The amendments offered provide clarity that this legislation would apply to WMATA buses and would also put in statute important provisions on the allowable use of images and duration that recorded images may be retained.

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.