

SB70_SponsorAmendment

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Position: FAV



SB0070/543123/1

AMENDMENTS
PREPARED
BY THE
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE
SERVICES

29 JAN 24
17:35:11

BY: Senator McCray
(To be offered in the Finance Committee)

AMENDMENT TO SENATE BILL 70
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 1, in line 19, after “**BUS ROUTE**” insert a comma; in the same line, strike “**OR**”; and in the same line, after “**LINE**” insert “**, OR THE CORRESPONDING PARATRANSIT SERVICE AREA**”.

On page 2, in line 9, strike the first “**THE**” and substitute “:

1. THE”;

and after line 9, insert:

“2. PARATRANSIT ROUTES;

3. THE CORRESPONDING PARATRANSIT SERVICE AREA; AND

4. THE ESTIMATED NUMBER OF PARATRANSIT RIDERS IMPACTED;”.

Senate Bill 70_Sen Cory McCray.pdf

Uploaded by: Destiny Bell

Position: FAV

CORY V. MCCRAY
Legislative District 45
Baltimore City

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Chair, Health and Human Services

Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Executive Nominations Committee

Legislative Policy Committee

Joint Committee on Gaming Oversight



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Vote Yes to SB 70

Title: Change in Bus Service – Impacts Report
Finance Committee
Hearing: January 31, 2024

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

I am writing to request your favorable vote on **Senate Bill 70**, a key piece of legislation that will require the Maryland Transit Administration to create a report on the effects of any proposed bus route reduction and/or cancellation. The report must be published on their website before a public hearing, distributed to relevant officials, and it must address the planned changes being made to the bus routes.

The purpose of **SB70** is to help the Maryland Transit Administration give people information in advance so that they can make informed alterations to their travel plans if need be. By publishing the report on the agency's website before a public hearing, the people will have increased accessibility to this important information, enabling community members to review and understand the proposed alterations. The purpose of distributing the report to relevant officials is to further ensure that decision-makers have a thorough understanding of the potential effects, creating a more informed dialogue during the decision-making process.

Significance and Impact: The significance of **SB70** is to create transparency between the people of Maryland and the Maryland Transit Administration. This approach alleviates many problems that the people of Maryland have to worry about daily. This bill strengthens accountability surrounding the Maryland Transit Administration, and fosters community engagement that contributes to a more informed and responsible management of state bus routes.

Important Considerations: A bus report must include information on the bus route or line, including a description of (1) the demographics of the riders on the route and the service area; (2) the schools in the service area; (3) the types of businesses in the service area; (4) the monthly ridership on the bus SB 70/ Page 2 route or line; and (5) the effect the service reduction or cancellation would have on the commutes of riders on the bus route or line; a description of the contents of any minutes, records, or documents related to the service reduction or cancellation; and a brief statement explaining the reason for the service reduction or cancellation.

This bill will not require a decrease in the General fund revenues.

This bill prioritizes Maryland citizens and their well-being which is why I would like to urge a favorable report for **Senate Bill 70**.

Respectfully,

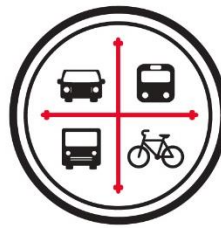
A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cory V. McCray". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C" and a long horizontal stroke.

Cory V. McCray
45th District

SB 70 Support_CMTA & Bikemore.pdf

Uploaded by: Eric Norton

Position: FAV



**Transportation
Alliance**

January 31, 2024

**Testimony on SB 70 –
Transportation – Change in Bus Service – Impacts Report –
Finance Committee**

Position: Favorable

The Central Maryland Transportation Alliance and Bikemore support Senate Bill 70, which addresses the important matter of transparency and public communication when the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) proposes service reductions or cancellations on its bus routes.

While it's important for MTA to maintain flexibility and it would be unreasonable to mandate that a bus route remain unchanged in perpetuity, it's critical that any changes be communicated openly with riders, especially those who have come to depend on the service.

The reporting requirements in SB 70 would help to ensure that riders, stakeholders, and public officials are aware of the potential implications of proposed service reductions. This approach aligns with the principles of open, transparent governance, empowers riders to understand the implications of proposed changes, and supports the public in commenting on the proposals reasonably and knowledgeably.

Senate Bill 70 represents a significant stride towards transparency, community involvement, and accountability in public transit decisions. We urge you to support the passage of this bill, as it not only safeguards the interests of riders but also upholds the principles of good governance.

We encourage a FAVORABLE report for Senate Bill 70.

DRM-Testimony-SB70-FAV- Final 01302024.pdf

Uploaded by: Gabriel Rubinstein

Position: FAV

SENATE FINANCE COMMITTEE**Senate Bill 70: Transportation - Change in Bus Service - Impacts Report****Date: January 31, 2024****Position: Support (with Sponsor Amendment)**

Thank you Madam Chair Beidle and Committee Members, and for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of Senate Bill 70. I'd also like to thank Senator McCray for recognizing the importance of paratransit to thousands of Marylanders with disabilities by his sponsorship of this bill, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify in support of the bill with the sponsor amendment.

Disability Rights Maryland (DRM) is the protection and advocacy organization for the state of Maryland. DRM's mission is to advocate for the legal rights of people with disabilities throughout the state. One of the mandated purposes of DRM's legal work is to ensure that people with disabilities are included in their communities.

Community integration requires public transportation systems that are equally reliable, effective, and accessible to people with disabilities. Senate Bill 70 increases the transparency of agency decisions, facilitates engagement and oversight from the community, and allows Marylanders with disabilities who travel by bus or paratransit to make better informed decisions pertaining to travel and life plans.

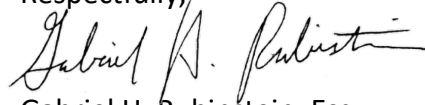
All Marylanders should be able to rely on consistent travel plans to facilitate their various life activities. When transit agencies change these routes or reduce service, unexpectedly, the result can be extremely chaotic for riders, and cause serious disruptions to riders' day-to-day activities. Those with disabilities are no exception, as many people with disabilities rely on bus and paratransit to travel to critical events like work, school, and medical appointments. Of course, it's important that our transit agencies have the ability to adapt to demand to allow systems to function optimally for all, but there must be a clear process and means of notice and engagement for those impacted. Senate Bill 70 provides such a process.

The understanding that alterations to bus routes directly impact paratransit riders is paramount, and Senate Bill 70 addresses this linkage by ensuring that the measured impact on bus routes will be applied to paratransit, and that the community will be informed. Senate Bill 70 requires the MTA to provide comprehensive information about those who will be impacted by bus and paratransit service reductions and route changes. This bill ensures that any proposed alterations to bus routes, which inherently affect paratransit services, are communicated in advance.

In conclusion, Senate Bill 70 is not just about transparency in transit changes; it is a crucial step toward ensuring accessibility and inclusivity for all individuals, including those with disabilities who rely on paratransit services.

For these reasons, DRM strongly supports Senate Bill 70 with the sponsor's amendment, and urges a favorable report.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gabriel H. Rubinstein". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Gabriel H. Rubinstein, Esq.
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BaltimoreCounty_FWA_SB0070.pdf

Uploaded by: Jennifer Lynch

Position: FWA



JOHN A. OLSZEWSKI, JR.
County Executive

JENNIFER AIOSA
Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

WILLIAM J. THORNE
Legislative Associate

BILL NO.: **SB 70**

TITLE: **Transportation – Change in Bus Service – Impacts Report**

SPONSOR: **Senator McCray**

COMMITTEE: **Finance**

POSITION: **SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENTS**

DATE: **January 31, 2024**

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS WITH AMENDMENTS** Senate Bill 70 – Transportation – Change in Bus Service – Impacts Report. This legislation would require the Maryland Transportation Authority to compile and publish a report on the impact of the cancellation or reduction in service, before the cancellation or reduction in service on any bus route,. The MTA would additionally be responsible for distributing the report and holding public hearings on the report.

Baltimore County supports this bill because it would notify local communities of any adverse effect in changes to MTA’s bus service. This is especially important as the State and Baltimore County enters a challenging budgetary season. By notifying the families who depend on these transit services of impending changes early, they can better prepare and Baltimore County can work to mitigate the burden on our residents. Baltimore County would encourage the sponsor to add local governments to the report’s distribution under section 7-508 (C) (II) of this legislation because changes in MTA’s service can adversely effect both the County’s circulator, the Towson Loop, and rideshare services such as CountyRide.

Accordingly, Baltimore County urges a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS** report on HB 29. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.

SB0070 - MTA - Change In Bus Service - Impacts Rep

Uploaded by: Patricia Westervelt

Position: INFO

January 31, 2024

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East, Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – Senate Bill 70 – Transportation – Change in Bus Service
Impacts Report***

Dear Chair Beidle and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) offers the following letter of information for the Committee's consideration on Senate Bill 70.

Senate Bill 70 would require the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to compile a report on the impacts of a proposed service change of an existing bus route, prior to announcing any service reduction or cancellation of that route. The report is to be published at least 30 days prior to holding a public hearing on the change and is to be shared with specific standing committees as well as each member of the General Assembly whose district would be impacted by the proposed service change.

The MTA regularly implements service changes to Core Bus service to ensure the complex system adapts to our passengers' changing travel needs and provides the best possible service with the resources available. The Fall Service Change is when major alignment and schedule changes are done to the network. When considering bus stop and route changes, MTA follows a ten-step process which considers factors such as race, income, and other socioeconomic variables to ensure no inadvertent impacts occur as relates to frequency and duration of service. This process includes an analysis of existing conditions, engagement with advisory groups and the public, and a service equity analysis. MTA develops a Riders Guide describing all proposed changes before public hearings are held. This information is provided on MTA's website and in print.

House Bill 9/Senate Bill 19 (2023) requires that, prior to holding a public hearing on a proposed service change, the MTA publish on its website an evaluation of the demographics of the riders of the routes and the service area; after completing public hearings, MTA is required to publish on its website a transportation equity analysis, cost-benefit analysis, and compile a report on the impacts of the proposed service change. The report is to be made public and submitted to the members of the Board of Public Works, the Attorney General, the Secretary of Transportation, any elected officials whose district would be impacted by the proposed service change, any community leaders consulted during the community outreach process, as well as members of the General Assembly.

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Page Two

In addition to what MTA is currently required to report on, Senate Bill 70 would require: the schools and types of businesses in the service area, monthly ridership of the route and the effect the service change would have on commutes, a description of the contents of any minutes, records, or documents related to the change, and a brief statement explaining the reason for the change. MTA would be able to compile this additional information, as it pertains to only those service changes that require public hearings, defined under MTA's Title VI Major Service Change Policy. Additionally, the MTA seeks clarification that only public documentation or minutes would be required. For consistency purposes, the MTA requests the Committee consider including the reporting requirements of Senate Bill 70 in Section 7-715 of the Transportation Article. It should be noted that Senate Bill 70 now requires a report prior to public hearings, as well as current law that requires a similar report to be submitted after the public hearing process.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests the Committee consider this information during its deliberations of Senate Bill 70.

Respectfully submitted,

Melissa Einhorn
Director of Governmental Affairs
Maryland Transit Administration
410-767-0820

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