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HB0089

1/25/2024

TO: Members of the House Ways and Means Committee

FROM: Nina Themelis, Director of the Mayor's Office of Government Relations

RE: HB0089 - Income Tax - Credit for Individuals Without Motor Vehicles
One Less Car Act of 2024

POSITION: Support

Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) is in support of House Bill (HB) 89.

HB 89 would create a \$1,000 state income tax credit available to Maryland taxpayers who do not own a motor vehicle and are not insured to drive someone else's vehicle. Effectively, this bill rewards eligible taxpayers who do not drive, thus advancing the state's sustainability goals.

Incentivizing Marylanders to carpool, bike, walk, use transit, telework, or live closer to their work is a step forward in meeting the State's thoughtful environmental goals. Carless Marylanders' environmental impact is significantly reduced compared to the average driver's. Their absence from roadways presents significant cost savings in the form of lowered demand for roadway expansion, less air quality remediation, and general environmental factors from vehicle disposal.

It is also important to acknowledge that many Maryland cannot afford a vehicle in the first place and this credit will have the added benefit of helping reduce financial hardship. In data from the most recent census. 27.3 % of households in Baltimore City do not have access to a vehicle and 8.8 % of households in the State of Maryland.

Incentives to encourage alternative modes of transportation will benefit single occupancy vehicle owners as well, by keeping more cars off the already congested roadways. More people walking, using transit, teleworking and biking to get to their destination is beneficial to public health, our environment, and the overall vibrancy of our collective communities.

For these reasons, the BCA respectfully request a favorable report on HB 89.