

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 on Senate Bill 401

Title: Transportation – Maryland Area Rail Commuter Rail Authority – Establishment
(Marc Rail Authority Act of 2025)
Budget & Taxation
Hearing: February 5, 2025

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

I am writing to request your favorable vote on **SB 401**, which seeks to create a new office dedicated to overseeing the operation, maintenance, repair, and funding of the MARC railroad: the MARC Rail Authority. The MARC Rail Authority will operate on behalf of the Department of Transportation with a high degree of autonomy including, but not limited to, the ability to issue and utilize bonds to finance MARC railroad facilities projects, the establishment of the MARC Rail Authority Fund, and the procurement of funds from any federal grant.

The establishment of the MARC Rail Authority would provide our overburdened transit systems with an office dedicated to ensuring a safe and efficient railroad service to our constituents. The office, while possessing the authorization to make its own regulatory and fiscal decisions, possesses a number of checks and balances to hold the office accountable. Firstly, its members would adhere to strict term limits and would be appointed by the House, the Senate, and the Governor in consultation with the Commissioner of Labor and Industry. While the Department of Transportation would necessarily be involved in the funding of the office, the MARC Rail Authority's debt and interest are not the direct responsibility of the department. Thusly, the new office would be able to function through its own efforts and not solely through its relationship with the Department of Transportation.

SB 401 presents an opportunity to improve our transit capabilities in Maryland. As of 2024 Q3 reporting, over 13,000 people ride on MARC trains daily. Yet this number has fallen dramatically since before the

pandemic from a staggering 40,000 passengers per day. Additionally, the MARC train has, since January of 2024, reported over 19% of their trains show up late. By implementing improvements to MARC's efficiency and outreach, we may be able to address key issues within transportation sector – such as road congestion, maintenance, and car accidents – by enticing people to return to railroad transit options. I urge you to vote favorably for **Senate Bill 401**. Our transit systems are emblematic of larger transportation issues that the state of Maryland has struggled to address for decades. This bill represents a step in the right direction, creating a new, autonomous office dedicated to improving a service critical to our constituents across Maryland.

Continued Blessings,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory V. McCray', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Cory V. McCray
45th District