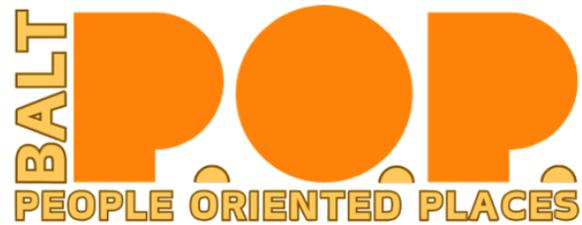


Bill: SB0020

Bill Title: Locally Operated Transit Systems -
Mandatory Funding - Inflation Adjustment (Local
Transit Sustainability Act)



Position: **Favorable**

Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee,

As a group which views public transit as being a preferred mode of transportation for maximizing the appeal and productivity of Baltimore and its closest-in suburbs, we feel that SB0020 is a very necessary bill whose time has come.

During the 2021 Maryland General Assembly session, the Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act was passed. That act mandated minimum funding levels in MTA's six year capital budget to begin to close the (at the time) \$2 billion gap in the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA's) maintenance backlog. SB0020 would appear to be the corollary of that 2021 bill, but for Maryland's Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS).

It only makes sense that Baltimore City's Charm City Circulator, Baltimore County's Towson Loop, Howard County's RTA, and many other Maryland LOTS need the same level of commitment to funding a state of good repair as the state-wide MTA. While we don't know if the baseline funding amount (\$80,533,314) called for in this bill is adequate to achieve that state of good repair, we do believe that increasing it to keep up with inflation is the right way to go.

While this bill seeks to index the funding level for LOTS against the consumer price index (CPI), it does allow for financial flexibility - in the form of an escape hatch should the CPI run abnormally hot. (Funding increases must equal the **lesser** of the percentage increase in the CPI **or** 5%.)

A convenient and well-functioning public transit system is core to the appeal and economic success of any metropolitan region. In order for the residents of Maryland to be happy and productive members of their communities, they need to be able to move about predictably, affordably, and safely.

We hope the committee finds these points helpful and convincing and we urge its members to **vote in favor of SB0020**. Thank you for your efforts and the opportunity for us to testify on this legislation.

[BaltPOP - Baltimoreans for People-Oriented Places](#)