



**Statement of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG)**

SB0384 – Metro Funding Modification Act of 2025

January 29, 2025

**TO:** The Honorable Chair Guy Guzzone and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee  
**FROM:** Clark Mercer, Executive Director  
Monica Beyrouti Nunez, Government Relations Manager

On behalf of the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments (COG), we are writing to offer our support for the Metro Funding Modification Act of 2025 (SB0384) sponsored by Senator Malcolm Augustine and urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.

As the association of local governments in metropolitan Washington, COG strongly supports efforts to ensure sufficient funding is provided to the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) to operate a safe and reliable Metro system. COG represents 24 local governments in suburban Maryland, Northern Virginia and the District of Columbia including Charles County, Frederick County, Montgomery County, and Prince George's County. Our region is home to nearly 6 million people, including 2.5 million from Maryland, and one of the nation's largest economies. The metropolitan Washington region is forecast to add 1.5 million people and 1 million jobs between 2020 and 2050. Managing this growth—and enhancing the region's quality of life—requires partnership.

We have worked closely with WMATA on our current DMVMoves initiative to develop a unified vision and sustainable funding model for public transit in our region. We believe that now is the right time to bring a diverse group of government, business, and community leaders together to take a holistic look at our transit network and decide what our region wants and needs, how much it will cost, how we'll pay for it, and how to best manage and govern it.

In FY2025 the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia compact jurisdictions came together to recognize the need to reset the base subsidy payments to Metro to account, in part, for the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on operating costs.

This bill appropriately adjusts the calculation provided annually to account for the increase in inflation and enables a re-baselining of 2019 funding to adjust to 2025 costs. This bill will contribute to maintaining existing service levels and keep Metro efficient, reliable and consistent with repairs and maintenance throughout Maryland and the rest of the region.

Metro's ridership on rail is at 70 percent of pre-pandemic levels and Metrobus on average has fully recovered. The rise in ridership also coincides with rail-customer satisfaction scores which reached 92 percent in 2024, giving Metro high marks in frequency, reliability, and safety. Metro's efforts to enhance public safety and deter fare evasion, down 82 percent at stations with modified fare gates, are playing key roles in the system's strong resurgence.

We look forward to continued partnership with Metro and Maryland leadership to ensure the success of our regional transportation system.

We thank Senator Augustine for introducing this necessary legislation and commend Maryland for being a leader to support Metro and region's transportation system.