

Support, HB-1144 *State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury*

To the Honorable Mark Korman, Chair; Regina Boyce, Vice Chair; and the Member of the House Environment and Transportation Committee

My name is Katherine Hodges, I am a member of the MARC Riders Advisory Council and Baltimore City Resident. I have been an avid user of Public Transit Services for the past 12 years. I wish to convey my support for **HB1144** *State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury*.

As a commuter who rides both MARC Commuter rail and MTA Bus, I have seen first-hand the abuse bus operators and train conductors endure just for doing their jobs. For the most part, in my experience, public transit employees carry themselves in a professional, friendly manner.

However, occasionally, I have seen some of the commuting public put their professionalism to the test. I've witnessed 1st hand transit employees be verbally abused, and spit on. I've seen people who were removed from a MARC train in the morning for bad behavior, riding a MARC train later in the afternoon on the same day. Sometimes with the same train crew.

As you can imagine, it has led to many awkward interactions. To me, this undermines the authority of the onboard transit service employees. Additionally, it makes passengers, like me, uncomfortable in reporting suspicious activities, knowing that even if the person is removed, they likely will not stay removed for long.

HB1144 would give me peace of mind. It is perfectly reasonable that a person who would assault a passenger or transit employee shouldn't have the privilege of using public transit service. HB1144 strikes that balance of holding people accountable for their behavior without having to put them behind bars. It is common sense safety legislation.

Thank you for your time. Please Vote FAVORABLE on HB1144