



TESTIMONY FOR HB0517

Transportation – Maryland Area Rail Commuter Rail Authority – Establishment (MARC Rail Authority Act of 2025)

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Korman

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0517 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

Our members support public transportation. It is a much more environmentally friendly mode of transportation than driving, and it supports our low- and moderate- income residents who can't afford to drive a car to work or school. Maryland has spent decades investing in roads, instead of making much better choices to support public transit. Our transit system shows this lack of investment.

The Maryland Transportation Authority does not seem to be able to manage the MARC system in a way that allows it to really serve the community. Today, MARC connects Baltimore and D.C. to many of Maryland's suburban communities, but service is too slow, infrequent, and disconnected. Service is unavailable altogether during much of the day and particularly on weekends. Investing in Maryland's passenger rail service and infrastructure would create jobs and new markets, unlock opportunities for residents, increase access to affordable housing and create a more sustainable transportation system.

This bill removes the MARC system from under the Maryland Transportation Authority's purview and create a separate, much more focused, MARC Rail Authority. We've needed to do this for a long time.

Our members believe that having a separate transportation authority focused on making the MARC system more beneficial for the residents of the state is a win/win for everyone. We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.