

February 20, 2025

The Honorable Marc Korman  
Chair, House Environment and Transportation Committee  
251 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

***RE: Letter of Information – House Bill 1144 – State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury***

Dear Chair Korman and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) takes no position on House Bill 1144 and offers the following information for the Committee’s consideration.

HB 1144 prohibits a person who is alleged by a public transit operator to have committed an assault or other intentional act causing bodily injury to a public transit operator or a passenger while the person is on board a State public transit service or at a State public transit service station from boarding a State public transit service or entering a State public transit service station for a period of time. A person who violates this provision is subject to prosecution for trespassing. The bans increase in length with subsequent allegations of an assault or an intentional act causing bodily injury, up to a permanent ban for certain conditions.<sup>1</sup> The Secretary of MDOT or the Secretary’s designee may reduce or increase the period of time that a person who violates HB 1144 is prohibited from boarding a State public transit service or entering a State public transit service station.

The Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) believes that all assaults committed against public transit operators or passengers are reprehensible and that these incidents are an assault on the public’s access to safe and reliable transportation. We appreciate the goal of protecting MTA’s operators, who provide vital services to the State, and its passengers. However, implementing HB 1144, should it pass, may prove challenging for MTA. The MTA Police Department will need to establish a system to track violators and correlate these records with the allegations that underly the ban. Further, MTA and the Secretary’s Office will need to coordinate to address the potential legal challenges that accompany implementing the proposed bill, including the application to allegations of assaults and intentional acts that cause bodily injury, the need for

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<sup>1</sup> Under new Transportation, § 7-705.1(b)(3), as drafted, a person may be prohibited from boarding a public transit service or entering a State public transit service station for life if the person 1) commits a third act of assault or intentional act causing bodily harm, or 2) for any act of assault or intentional act causing bodily injury for which the person used a weapon.

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notice and a hearing before establishing a ban, and the process and limits of the authority to alter the length of a ban.

The Maryland Department of Transportation respectfully requests that the Committee consider this information during its deliberation of House Bill 1144.

Respectfully submitted,

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