

Chantese Robinson Copy of HB 1144 - State Public T

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Position: FAV

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300

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HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury Favorable

House Environment & Transportation Committee
February 20th, 2025

Story of Chantese Robinson

Bus Operator at Northwest Bus Division for Maryland Transit Administration

A bus operator with the MTA for 9 years. A passenger assaulted her and stole her property. She reported this to the company and they did nothing. He still rides her bus regularly. There has not been an arrest. He continues to make verbal threats to her. She attempted to get a restraining order served on him. She has a court date signed up, but it does not stop him from getting on the bus. He pulled a knife on another female operator. This has happened multiple times over the course of a year.

HB 1144_AFSCME3_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Denise Gilmore

Position: FAV



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Patrick Moran – President

**HB 1144 – State Public Transit Service and Stations –
Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury
Environment and Transportation Committee
February 20, 2025**

Position: FAVORABLE

AFSCME Council 3 represents 45,000 state, county, and municipal employees, including police officers serving with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). Many of our members are also regular MTA riders, relying on the system daily to commute to work. We strongly support HB 1144. This bill mandates that the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) establish a policy that bans or excludes individuals from MTA services who commit assaults against passengers or transit workers, either on or near transit vehicles. This is important legislation to help keep transit workers and riders safe, especially at a time when assaults on transit workers are increasing.

HB 1144 provides a reasonable and effective approach to enforcing MTA policies, ensuring a safe transit environment for all riders. When passengers violate rules designed to protect everyone, there must be clear and consistent consequences. The bill stipulates that a first offense results in a 30-day ban, a second offense leads to a 180-day ban, and a third offense results in a lifetime ban. This approach mirrors similar legislation passed in states like Virginia, Illinois, New Jersey, Oregon, California, and Massachusetts. While it is essential to maintain accessible public transit for all, this should not extend to allowing passengers to engage in assaultive behavior without facing accountability.

We urge the committee to provide a favorable report on HB 1144. Thank you.

HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service and Station

Uploaded by: Denise Riley

Position: FAV



A Union of Professionals
AFT-Maryland

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Kenya Campbell
PRESIDENT

LaBrina Hopkins
SECRETARY-TREASURER

**Written Testimony in Support of HB 1144
State Public Transit Service and Stations – Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
February 20, 2025**

Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and Members of the Committee, AFT Maryland supports HB 1144, legislation that seeks to enhance the safety of Maryland’s public transit system by establishing clear consequences for individuals who commit acts of assault or intentional bodily injury while utilizing state public transit services. This bill is a necessary step to ensure that public transit remains a safe and reliable mode of transportation.

Every day, thousands of Marylanders rely on public transit to commute to work, school, medical appointments, and other essential activities. Transit operators, who serve as the backbone of our transportation system, should be able to perform their duties without fear of violence or harassment. Unfortunately, incidents of assault on public transit have become an increasing concern, putting both transit workers and passengers at risk. HB 1144 addresses this urgent issue by prohibiting individuals who commit acts of violence from using public transit for specified periods based on the severity and recurrence of their offenses.

Under HB 1144, individuals who assault a transit operator or passenger will face escalating penalties, including temporary exclusion from public transit services for first and second offenses, and a lifetime ban for repeated or weapon-involved assaults. Additionally, the bill includes provisions that allow the Secretary of Transportation or their designee to adjust exclusion periods as necessary, ensuring fairness and appropriate enforcement.

HB 1144 strikes the right balance between public safety and fairness. By ensuring that individuals who engage in violent behavior face real consequences, this bill will help create a more secure and welcoming environment on Maryland’s public transit system. Thank you.

HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service Stations -

Uploaded by: Donna Edwards

Position: FAV



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Donna S. Edwards

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HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury House Environment and Transportation Committee February 20, 2025

SUPPORT

Donna S. Edwards

President

Maryland State and DC AFL-CIO

Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 1144. My name is Donna S. Edwards, and I am the President of the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. On behalf of Maryland's 300,000 union members, I offer the following comments.

Assault on our public employees is an assault on all of us. Transit workers, by the nature of their job, interact with the public on a daily basis, and are, oftentimes, the subject of assault. For our transit system to operate effectively and efficiently, it must be a safe and secure environment for our operators.

HB 1144 aligns Maryland with six other states and Montgomery County, in taking a significant step in protecting our transit operators by imposing penalties for individuals who have committed an assault or other intentional act causing bodily injury. As written, a first offense results in a minimum 30-day suspension, a second offense results in a 180-day suspension, and a third offense, or any incident involving a weapon, results in a lifetime ban.

In FY2023, the Maryland Transit Association (MTA), the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), and the Locally Operated Transit Systems (LOTS), reported a total of 156 transit operator assaults across the state. Of those, 119 (nearly 77%) were "simple assaults," not involving a weapon, while 31 were considered aggravated assaults.¹ These numbers highlight the ongoing risks transit workers face simply for doing their jobs, further emphasizing the need for legislative intervention.

¹ "Assaults on Public Transit Operators (Transportation Article §7-714)." Department of Legislative Services. December 2023.

Our dedicated transit workers uphold the system that many Marylanders rely on, ensuring that operations run smoothly. They are the face of our transportation system and deserve the respect and protections they are owed.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on HB 1144.

Hodges Testimony HB1144.pdf

Uploaded by: Kattherine Hodges

Position: FAV

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

HB 1144 Turner testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Marilyn Miller

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
HB 1144
State Public Transit Service and Stations – Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury
February 20, 2025
SUPPORT**

As a Transit Supervisor who has been a victim of this abuse and witnessed firsthand the effects of allowing persons involved in assaulting Bus Operators and other transit workers with no consequences, it truly saddens me. The Operators who provide exceptional services become fearful or filled with anxiety. It's a horrible feeling to come to work and not feel safe. Knowing the person who assaulted you is still out there, existing as though nothing has happened. It also saddens me that after an incident and Police are called with the suspect there and they do ABSOLUTELY NOTHING! Their reasoning, "I didn't witness it." The situation of Transit Worker assaults should be treated as domestic violence. When Officers respond to those, they normally make an arrest. They were not there to witness the act of violence, but the scene let them know an act of violence occurred. We have had more than our fair share of Officers responding and doing nothing even with the abuser still on location. Which only leaves our Transit Workers to continue to feel unsafe. It's beyond disheartening.

Once nothing happens, there is no consequence for their action, they just board the next bus or rail service, go on about their day as though nothing happened, to commit the same act. They have a new victim. This needs to be addressed. This bill would give the transit workers some sense of security.

I am requesting a FAVORABLE vote on this bill.

Shamika Turner, Member
MECA Council 1014 – Supervisors Unlimited for
Collective Bargaining

HB1144 Maynard testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Marilyn Miller

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
HB 1144
State Public Transit Service and Stations – Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury
February 20, 2025
SUPPORT**

As a Supervisor for Transit Workers, I have seen firsthand how allowing subjects to continue riding services after assaulting an operator can greatly affect other services. Subjects have assaulted workers and were allowed to walk away, only to get on the following service and commit the same act. As victims, operators have come in contact with the accused days later after being assaulted. This bill will not only ensure the safety of our workers but also serve as a deterrent to criminals who want to engage in these types of attacks.

Donald Maynard, President
MCEA Council 1014, Supervisors Unlimited

HB1144 Miller testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Marilyn Miller

Position: FAV

**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Environment and Transportation Committee
HB 1144
State Public Transit Service and Stations – Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury
February 20, 2025
SUPPORT**

Maryland Classified Employees Inc., MCEA/AFT Local 1935, is supporting this bill. This bill would protect our transit workers. Too many times, we have seen the public abuse our transit workers and only receive a slap on the wrist and return the next day to abuse the same transit worker making the transit worker work in fear of being abused again. This bill would give transit workers some security in their job.

MCEA is requesting a favorable vote on this bill.

Marilyn Miller, President
MCEA/AFT Local 1935

HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service and Station

Uploaded by: Michael McMillan

Position: FAV

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300

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HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury House Environment & Transportation Committee February 20th, 2025

ATU Local 1300 represents over 3,000 transit workers at the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). This includes bus operators, bus mechanics, rail operators, rail maintenance workers, and more. Our members keep Maryland moving every day.

For years, transit workers from across the state have come to the Maryland General Assembly and asked for your help to keep us safe from assaults. Over the last decade, attacks on our members have dramatically increased, with no end in sight. Transit workers have public facing roles on the front lines at the intersections of a public health, mental health, poverty, and drug crisis.

This year, we come back to the General Assembly with a proposed solution. Ban passengers that attack transit workers or other passengers from using the service. These people have proven themselves incapable of using the transportation services safely and are a risk to others.

Since the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law included language requiring the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) to study the issue of transit worker assaults, we finally have the data to prove what our members have said for years. When publishing its historic “General Directive 24-1: Required Actions Regarding Assaults on Transit Workers,” former FTA Deputy Administrator Veronica Vanterpool stated, “No American should go to work and worry they will not return home safely. That is particularly true for the transit workers who were valuable frontline workers in our nation’s time of need. Transit workers experienced a significant increase in assaults over the years, which is unacceptable... We will continue to take action to ensure that our nation’s transit workers are safe and secure while running our nation’s trains, buses, and transit facilities.”

The FTA conducted extensive research on the issue and found that one of the most effective policies to keep transit workers safe were bans and service exclusions.¹ The report explicitly commended these policies, noting:

- *“Bus operator perspective—increased perception of security and management support for operators; lets bus operators know that management is serious about their security.*
- *Customer perspective—lets customers know that the agency is serious about security and might not allow violations of their codes of conduct.*
- *Does not require significant investments in equipment or security personnel.”*

Though the FTA also highlighted that one of the largest impediments to adopting service exclusions was that agencies were unclear on whether they had the authority to implement these policies. That is part of the reason we are here to support HB 1144. We believe the General Assembly should make its position on transit safety clear - if you can’t ride the service safely, you cannot use the transit service.

¹ Federal Transit Administration. “Report on Practices to Protect Bus Operators from Passenger Assault.” Transit Cooperative Research Program: Synthesis 93.

In January 2023, an MTA Mobility Link driver was shot and killed while at work². Just a few days later, a WMATA worker was killed while trying to prevent a mass shooting.³ In 2021, there were three shooting deaths of transit workers.⁴ In 2019, Marcus Parks, a 20 year operator and one of our members was shot and killed. Dozens of incidents of attacks, assaults, harassment, and verbal confrontations never make the public news but are experienced by our transit workers every year.

With our testimony today we have invited several transit workers to share their experiences and perspectives. We hope you hear their stories today and recognize that the people here today represent just a small fraction of our members who have been through something similar. We have also included additional information on transit service exclusions and transit assault data.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report for HB 1144.

² WMAR. "MTA mobility driver killed in "violent crime" during work shift." January 30, 2023.

³ BBC News. "Washington DC metro worker who died tackling gunman is a 'hero'" February 3, 2023.

⁴ Justin George, "Third killing of a transit worker in Baltimore sparks calls for improved security." Washington Post. August 27, 2021.

Similar Legislation

Virginia - Passed in 2023 - Originally bill HB 2330 – Section F: "The sentence of such person upon conviction shall also prohibit such person from entering or riding in any vehicle operated by the public transportation service that employed such operator for a period of not less than six months as a term and condition of such sentence."

Illinois - Passed in 2023 - Originally bill HB 1342 – Allows transit agencies to pass regulations that allow them to ban passengers or confiscate their ride cards if they verbally or physically threaten a transit worker. This is a lower bar than actual physical assault – just threats or yelling would qualify.

New Jersey - Passed in 2022 - Originally bill HB 4071 - "developing a new policy that will ban riders who assault drivers or other NJ Transit employees, with a lifetime ban possible for assault with a deadly weapon...the policy is part of a law passed last year, the Motorbus and Passenger Rail Service Employee Violence Protection Act (VPA), that also raised fines for assaulting transit workers.

Oregon - Effective Since 2017 - ORS 166.116 Interfering with public transportation - "TriMet has allowed long-term bans since 2017 for people who commit assaults on board that rise to the level of a felony, but those who commit misdemeanors were banned for a maximum of 90 days." Since 2022 - A person who has committed three or more violations would become eligible for a ban of six month or longer, regardless of the level of their offense."

California - Effective for some time, but most recently updated in September 2024 - Certain transit operators are given authority to ban passengers. For example, VTA received permission in Assembly Bill 1735 in 2024. The Sacramento Regional Transit District, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Fresno Area Express, and the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District are also permitted under state law to issue prohibition orders.

Massachusetts - "In Boston, police officers are allowed to bar a person from a particular bus or line for a maximum of 24 hours, said Richard Sullivan, superintendent of transit police at the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority. A stay-away order for anything longer than that must come from a judge as part of the arraignment process or sentencing."

Montgomery County - "Individuals who violate the disruptive behavior rule by engaging in prohibited behavior are subject to a 90-day suspension of service and/or fines or imprisonment for up to 6 months. Prohibited behaviors include interfering with the operation of the vehicle, eating/drinking/smoking, fighting, spitting, yelling, threatening the driver or others on board, tossing or throwing articles or projectiles, and unwanted touching or conversation with another passenger. The exclusion is enforced by transit supervision with assistance from local law enforcement when needed."

National Transit Database - Transit Worker Assault Data

The Federal Transit Administration requires that major transit systems report safety data to the National Transit Database (NTD). Incidents are broken down into major (i.e. someone required transportation to a hospital) and non-major. Non-major incidents are aggregated and not reported individually.

In 2024, the NTD reported the following data for WMATA, MTA, RideOn, & The Bus:

- 33 assaults on operators (major events - requiring transport to hospital)
- 62 other major events (e.g. assault on non-operator, assaults on passengers)
- 191 non-major physical assaults on operators & 204 non-major assaults on other transit workers.

2023 MTA Report - Assaults on Public Transit Operators (Transportation Article §7-714)

Section 7-714, Maryland Annotated Code for Transportation requires that the MTA compile a report on transit assaults in the state. The last report was published in 2023.

Table 1: Findings Summary Table

Field	MTA	WMATA (Maryland Only)	LOTS	Total
Assaults (Total)	95	46	15	156
<i>Assaults (Percentage)</i>	60.9%	29.5%	9.6%	100%
Assault Type				
<i>Simple</i>	76	35	8	119
<i>Aggravated</i>	17	8	6	31
<i>Threat</i>	2	3	-	5
<i>Unknown</i>	-	-	1	1
Mode				
<i>Bus</i>	79	35	15	129
<i>Metro</i>	9	10	-	19
<i>Demand Response</i>	6	1	-	7
<i>Light Rail</i>	1	-	-	1
<i>Commuter Rail</i>	-	-	-	0
<i>Commuter Bus</i>	-	-	-	0
Employee Type				
<i>Bus Operator</i>	79	35	15	129
<i>Station Manager/Attendant</i>	1	8	-	9
<i>Demand Response Operator</i>	6	1	-	7
<i>Metro Operator</i>	4	2	-	6
<i>Unknown</i>	4	-	-	4
<i>Light Rail Operator</i>	1	-	-	1

Sherrell Austin Copy of HB 1144 - State Public Tra

Uploaded by: Sherrell Austin

Position: FAV

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HB 1144 - State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury Favorable House Environment & Transportation Committee February 20th, 2025

Story of Sherrell Austin

Bus Operator at Northwest Bus Division for Maryland Transit Administration

Sherrell came across the same guy referenced in Chantese's story. He got into a verbal altercation with her. He was on her bus, smoking and playing music. After Sherrell asked him to stop, the two of them got into an argument. He exited the bus and started making threats to her, saying "You just wait." He ran across the street and retrieved a rottweiler dog and tried to bring it onto the bus to attack her. She called the MTA Police. The guy started to smack the mirrors and mess with the bike rack in an attempt to get her off the vehicle. He took the dog back across the street and she used this opportunity to let passengers off the bus and onto another bus that pulled up. The man then attempted to board the bus again. He then attempted to use a knife to attack her through the operator's side window. This story occurred within the last month.

Andrea Weigel Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Andrea Wiegel

Position: FWA

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Chairperson/Director

TOM CAHILL
Vice Chairperson/Assistant
Director

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February 15, 2025

Favorable; HB1144 - State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury.

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 600
RANDY MARTZ

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
BRITTANY GARRIS

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHN WALKER

Local 1949
JACOB STROMAN

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

My name is Andrea Wiegel, I am a Passenger Train Conductor with over 20 years of service working for both Amtrak and MARC. I am expressing my support for **HB1144**.

While working on a Marc train from Washington DC to Baltimore Penn station, a passenger boarded without a ticket and refused to pay. The Conductor put that passenger off at Halethorpe station. I was flagging the platform, a practice where we hang on the side of our slowly moving train as it is departing the station, observing the station's platform, ensuring that the train is not dragging any people down the platform.

It was during this time that I was attacked by the removed passenger, whom I didn't have any previous interactions with. The passenger decided he wanted to get back on the train by bulldozing through me.

When that didn't work, he tried to pull me off a moving train. He grabbed ahold of my sweater trying to pull me. With one hand, I held hold onto the handle rail, with the other trying to get him to release me. The train was brought to a stop, and the police were called.

I never received the passenger's name or any information about what happened to him after the attack. I have not worked on a MARC since. For all I know, he could still be riding the train to this day. The attack left me out of work for over a year with left shoulder, lower back and leg injuries.

This bill would give us all a piece of mind when coming to do our jobs, knowing that a person who assaults another will be held accountable. We wouldn't fear running into the person again on the train, sometimes the same day. A person who assaults another person should not be allowed to ride a train again.

To this day I still fear running into my attacker. Something no human being should have to endure for performing service for the State of Maryland. Thank you for your time, I urge for a FAVORABLE Report on **HB1144**.

Andrea Wiegel
Conductor
Member, SMART-TD 1470

Brian Perry Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Brian Perry

Position: FWA

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Chairperson/Director

TOM CAHILL
Vice Chairperson/Assistant
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February 15, 2025

Favorable; HB1144 - State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury

REPRESENTATIVES

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RANDY MARTZ

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BALTIMORE
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JOHN WALKER

Local 1949
JACOB STROMAN

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

Hello, my name is Brian Perry, I am a Railroader with 35 years of service. I am a member of the Transportation Division of SMART and for the last 15 years, I have worked as a Conductor for both Amtrak and MARC. I am urging a favorable report on **HB-1144**.

While boarding passengers in the West Baltimore station stop, a man walked up to my fellow conductor and told him he did not have a ticket and that he was boarding the train. At which point he was told that he needed to have one in order to ride. The man became quarrelsome, grabbed my coworker by the shirt, knocked him into the stairs of the train and drug him into it.

I then grabbed him from behind, removing him from off of my coworker, and together we were able to restrain him, until he calmed down. A 3rd member of our crew got help from the MTA police. We both sustained injuries and missed months of work.

While he was arrested in this instance, charges were not pressed. This doesn't happen most of the time. Usually, the attackers are removed from one train, then allowed to board the very next one. Imagine someone walking into this building in the morning, attacks one of you, then be allowed to do it again that same afternoon, the next day, week and so on. Unimaginable, right? We face this scenario, EVERYDAY

This bill would ensure accountability. It'll make trains safer for both us and our passengers. It will be a deterrent to would be attackers, knowing there will be consequences for their acts.

I am certain that everyone wants a safe environment to work in. This bill would do this for us. Thank you for your time and I urge a favorable report!

Brian Perry
Conductor, MARC & Amtrak
Member, SMART-TD Local 1470

HB1144_CharlieScott_fwa.pdf

Uploaded by: Charlie Scott

Position: FWA



WASHINGTON METROPOLITAN AREA TRANSIT AUTHORITY

Public Testimony – Favorable With Amendment Support of HB1144

State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury

Before the House Environment and Transportation Committee

February 20, 2025

Mr. Chairman, members of the committee, thank you for allowing me to testify today. For the record, my name is Charlie Scott, and I am the Senior Government Relations Officer for the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). I am here to urge your strong support for House Bill 1144 with amendments to clarify that this policy should apply to all transit systems in the state.

I thank Delegate Addison for sponsoring this legislation and for offering sponsor amendments to expand the applicability of this legislation to all transit systems in Maryland. For clarity, I am suggesting further amendments below.

At Metro, the fares we charge and the rules and regulations governing customers in our system are all established in an official tariff approved by the WMATA Board of Directors.

As part of our Annual Public Safety Initiatives Update shared with our Board Safety and Operations Committee on January 30, 2025, this very policy of banning repeat and egregious offenders was recommended as an industry best practice.

Our Board of Directors has the authority to amend our tariff to establish such a policy for Metrorail and Metrobus. We believe that additionally having this policy in state statute will further reinforce the message that for the safety of our customers and our employees, egregious offenders have no place in our system.

At Metro, we are currently conducting a peer analysis to inform the establishment of rule to ban repeat and egregious offenders and will bring this back to our Board of Directors for consideration and action this spring. As shared with our Board, our focus will be on offenders who have committed sex offenses and offenders who have assaulted Metro employees.

To further clarify that this bill should cover all transit systems in Maryland, I recommend the following modifications:

In all places where the bill references "state public transit service" or "state public transit service stations," change to "public transit service" or "public transit service

station.” Additionally, the definition of public transit service should be modified to delete the reference to public transit operated by the administration or another state agency.

(3) “STATE PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE” MEANS ANY OF THE FOLLOWING,
~~IF OPERATED BY THE ADMINISTRATION OR ANOTHER STATE AGENCY:~~

(I) BUS SERVICE;

(II) TRAIN SERVICE;

(III) LIGHT RAIL SERVICE; AND

(IV) SUBWAY SERVICE.

(4) “~~STATE PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE STATION~~” MEANS A STOP OR
STATION FOR STATE PUBLIC TRANSIT SERVICE.

With these amendments, we believe the ability to ban offenders is another tool we can deploy to improve the safety and security of our customers and our employees. For these reasons, I urge a favorable with amendment report.

WMATA Proposed Banning

Annual Public Safety Initiatives Update

- No current banning program
- Currently only courts can issue bans on the Metro system
 - Short duration only (e.g., 30 days)
 - Limited to station or bus line where offense occurs
- Best practice and recommendation
 - Implement a banning process for WMATA
 - Create a policy based on best practices, and Counsel oversight, that includes an appeal process
 - Run public education campaign
 - Ban repeat and egregious offenders:
 - Sex offenses
 - Employee assaults



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32 of 33 

Written Testimony HB1144.pdf

Uploaded by: David Pendleton

Position: FWA

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February 16, 2025

Support, HB-1144 State Public Transit Service and Stations – Exclusion for Assaults and Bodily Injury

To the Honorable Mark Korman, Chair; Regina Boyce, Vice Chair and Members of the House Environment and Transport Committee.

REPRESENTATIVES

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BALTIMORE
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JOHN WALKER

Local 1949
JACOB STROMAN

Support, HB1144 State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury

My name is David Pendleton, I am the Director of the Maryland Safety and Legislative Board for the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal Air Rail Transportation Workers (SMART). Our members in the State of Maryland are employees of CSX Transportation, Norfolk Southern, Canton Railroad, Amtrak and MARC (Amtrak and Alstom). We are Conductors, Engineers, Yardmasters, Switchmen, and Utility Workers. We are the **TRAIN UNION**.

SMART's first responsibility is to ensure a safe working environment for Its members. On their behalf I urge a favorable report for **HB-1144**.

Assault is a terrible crime that is perpetrated on its victims without regard for their race, sex, age or religion. More often than not, assaults on Conductors stem from us saying two small words...ticket please. It is the simplest of our duties that causes the most issues.

Often when this happens on MARC, the perpetrator is allowed to catch the very next train. Should it happen in the morning, we're likely to see them later in the afternoon on the same day. Definitely, the next day.

HB-1144 would put a stop to this injustice. It would hold perpetrators of assault accountable for their actions by taking away the privilege of utilizing public transit services. Passage of this bill will send a clear message that the State wants a safer public transit service for its workers and commuters.

This commonsense legislation has passed in Virginia, Illinois, New Jersey, New York, Oregon, California, Georgia, Florida and here locally in Montgomery County. It is time for the State of Maryland to join this list. To make the commute to work safer for the riding public

Thank you for your time and consideration of our position. I urge a favorable report

Sincerely,
David Sr

David Pendleton Sr., Chairperson/Director
Maryland Safety & Legislative Board, LO-023
SMART Transportation Division

Comparable Laws

- **Virginia** - Passed in 2023 - Originally bill [HB 2330](#) – Section F: "The sentence of such person upon conviction shall also prohibit such person from entering or riding in any vehicle operated by the public transportation service that employed such operator for a period of not less than six months as a term and condition of such sentence."
- **Illinois** - Passed in 2023 - Originally bill [HB 1342](#) – Allows transit agencies to pass regulations that allow them to ban passengers or confiscate their ride cards if they verbally or physically threaten a transit worker. This is a lower bar than actual physical assault – just threats or yelling would qualify.
- **New Jersey** - Passed in 2022 - Originally bill [HB 4071](#) - "developing a new policy that will ban riders who assault drivers or other NJ Transit employees, with a lifetime ban possible for assault with a deadly weapon...the policy is part of a law passed last year, the Motorbus and Passenger Rail Service Employee Violence Protection Act (VPA), that also raised fines for assaulting transit workers. "The policy would be similar to a national 'no fly list' law that airlines are seeking to bar violent passengers."
- **New York** – Passed in 2010, New York penal [code 65.10](#) k2, allows a judge to ban an individual for assaulting (sexually or physically) an employee of the MTA, however not a single offender had it applied to them. In 2022, the MTA in NYC previously sought under existing criminal statutes in NY to add a ban from public transit to the sentences of those convicted of assaults on transit workers. But Gov. Hochul also announced recently that she was seeking to change policy to do that... "These new investments build on the Governor's previous deployments of public safety programs and resources throughout the subway system, including a new proposal to ban assaulters of commuters and transit workers, improved coordination between law enforcement and district attorneys, and installing new cameras in subway trains throughout the system to help protect customers, conductors and staff."
- **Oregon** - Effective Since 2017 – [TriMet code 28.18](#), has allowed for TriMet to issue long-term bans since 2017 for people who commit assaults on board that rise to the level of a felony, but those who commit misdemeanors were banned for a maximum of 90 days." Since 2022 - A person who has committed three or more violations would become eligible for a ban of six month or longer, regardless of the level of their offense. The changes will take effect Jan. 13." See: ORS 166.116 Interfering with public transportation.
- **California** – [AB-716](#), passed in 2012, granted authority to local transit agencies the authority to issue prohibition orders. Most recently updated in September 2024, Certain transit operators are given authority to ban passengers. For example, VTA received permission in Assembly Bill 1735 in 2024. The Sacramento Regional Transit District, the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority, the Fresno Area Express, and the San Francisco Bay Area Rapid Transit District are also permitted under state law to issue prohibition orders.
- **Georgia** - [MARTA](#), Bans typically range from 14 to 60 days depending on the violation, crimes against a person (sexual or violent) especially involving a weapon carries a 365 day ban, potentially lifetime depending on severity of crime. Repeat offenders 3 violations in 90 days – 1 year, 4 in 90 = lifetime
- **Florida** - "[PTSA](#)" – They have a code of conduct policy that lists prohibited behaviors, fare evasion is not listed. Violations can lead to expulsion or trespass orders, however PTSA does not have the authority to issue trespass orders. PTSA relies on local police for enforcement, blanket trespass orders are issued to local police for their use on PTSA right of ways.
- **Montgomery County Maryland** - "[Montgomery County Transit's Disruptive Behavior policy](#) is believed to discourage repeat violations of agency rules. Individuals who violate the disruptive behavior rule by engaging in prohibited behavior are subject to a 90-day suspension of service and/or fines or imprisonment for up to 6 months. Prohibited behaviors include interfering with the operation of the vehicle, eating/drinking/smoking, fighting, spitting, yelling, threatening the driver or others on board, tossing or throwing articles or projectiles, and unwanted touching or conversation with another passenger. The exclusion is enforced by transit supervision with assistance from local law enforcement when needed."

Effectiveness of Exclusion Policies

In 2024, the National Academies released a report on its study of [Transit Exclusion Policies in Public Transportation Systems](#). The study analyzed many transit systems across the country. It studied effectiveness for three, each have similar operations to the MTA.

- BART – California
- MARTA – Georgia
- PTSA – Florida

Each system uses a different means of enforcement and have varying levels of dependency on local police for assistance with enforcement. BART and MARTA being the biggest, each have their own police force (like the MTA), are able to enforce its policy using its own police force. Whereas PTSA relies on Local police for enforcement.

BART

Operating out of San Francisco, connecting the East Bay cities with San Mateo and Santa Clara Counties along with an additional 130 miles of track, 50 stations and operations in 5 counties. According to the study, since 2015, when BART began to include info on repeat offenders, people “overwhelmingly” complied with the prohibition orders. Only a small percentage of people who were readmitted re-offended more than once. Only one time in 2015, did someone violate the prohibition order. No one violated it in 2016 and 2017. Over an 8-year period, 2,365 prohibition orders were issued, averaging 296 orders issued per year. Over that same period on average, annually, 18 times or 6% were prohibition orders violated.

MARTA

Operating out of Atlanta, and throughout the 5 cities surrounding it. Has 1,439 roadway miles, 100 routes, 30 stations serviced by rail and a mobility fleet of 173 lift vans. According to the report, its policy has reduced crime and has made passengers feel safe. MARTA has suspended 10,000 passengers since 2013 for unruly behavior. In 2022 MARTA reported that Part 1 crimes (including violent crime and property damage) are down 17%, operator assaults are down 42%. On average, 5 year [Crime statistics](#) on MARTA shows a drop since the implementation of their Code of Conduct.


PTSA

Operating out of Pinellas County Florida, covering St Petersburg, Largo, Clearwater and other jurisdictions in the county. They work alongside HART, providing transit service to Hillsborough Tampa Airport. According to the report, PTSA believe its Exclusion and trespass policy is a deterrent. 85% of its passengers who reboard after an exclusion, complies with their code of conduct.

Data on Transit Operator Assaults in Maryland and Notes on Attachments

- The NTD lists 33 "major events" of assaults on operators in 2024 that were reported by WMATA and MTA to the FTA. If you expand this to all incidents they reported it grows to 95.
 - Note that the [Urban Institute critiqued the NTD report](#) process, finding that, "***Assaults on transit workers have tripled since 2008***. Using data from the National Transit Database, I find that "major" assaults on transit workers (PDF)—defined by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) ***as an event resulting in a fatality or injury requiring medical transport***—nearly tripled between 2008 and 2022, from 168 to 492 annual events nationwide. Given the high reporting threshold for inclusion in the dataset, this staggering increase should be interpreted as an undercount of the true magnitude of this issue. New Jersey Transit, for example, reported three major assault events in 2021, but reports from other sources have cited the agency with more than 130 assault events for the same year. Assaults, both those that do and do not meet the FTA's "major" threshold, include stabbing, spitting, hitting and kicking, and unwelcome sexual misconduct. Operators have also reported being robbed, having things thrown at them, being doused with urine and hot beverages, being threatened at gunpoint, and shot at."
- The NTD's non-major event data (i.e. no one had to go to the hospital) includes 191 physical assaults on transit operators in 2024 at WMATA (unable to remove non-Maryland data), MTA, MARC, RideOn, and PG's TheBus. The same data includes 204 assaults on "other transit workers."
- Transportation Article §7-714 requires that MTA publish a report "Assaults on Public Transit Operators" starting on December 1st, 2023 and each December 1st after that. MTA published the first report ([attached here](#)). As of yet, the 2024 report has not been released.
- ***The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL), Public Law 117-58, modified 49 U.S.C. 5329***, including a new definition of transit worker assault, initiatives to improve the collection of data on transit worker assaults that is reported to the National Transit Database (NTD), and a requirement for agencies serving large UZAs to establish risk reduction programs aimed at preventing transit worker assaults. According to NTD data, transit worker assaults have increased 121 percent from 2008 to 2021.
- [Governing](#) has a very solid overview of transit worker safety legislation as of 2023.

Other Transit Agencies

Transit Agency	Fine	Suspension/Ejection*	Barring/Banning*	Appeals
BART 	\$75 Adults \$55 Minors >\$250 Criminal	Warning Immediate	Immediate 30 Days > 1 Year	Internal Hearing Court Hearing
CTA - Chicago 	<\$300 Fare Forfeiture	Immediate	Under Consideration	Under Consideration
DART 	>\$100	Immediate Trespass Warning	Immediate Trespass Warning <Permanent	Internal Appeals Decision is Final
LA Metro 	>\$75 Adults >\$40 Minors Fare Forfeiture	1st Offense 2nd Offense	3rd Offense or Greater <Permanent	Internal Hearing Decision is Final
MARTA 	\$0 Fare Forfeiture	Immediate >12 Hours	Notice 14 Days >1 Year <Permanent	Internal Panel Decision is Final

* Length of time varies from hours to days to permanent depending on a variety of factors by Agency.



<https://www.wmata.com/about/board/meetings/board-pdfs/upload/3A-Tariff-Update.pdf>

SUSPENSION-OF-SERVICE POLICY

Suspensions of service or passenger bans demonstrate the agency's commitment to improving the security of transit service. These suspension-of-service policies have been implemented at agencies such as Capital District Transportation Authority in Albany, New York; Metro Transit in Madison, Wisconsin; Montgomery County Transit in Maryland; Las Vegas RTC; Pierce Transit; SUN METRO in El Paso, Texas; and the Edmonton Transit System in Canada.

These were reported to be effective in reducing repeat offenders. The transit agencies worked with their municipalities to adopt laws that enable them to exclude individuals who violate their fare payment and other policies or codes of conduct. Any excluded individual who attempts to board a bus would be considered trespassing on agency property.

This policy deters potential offenders through the threat of not being allowed onto the transit system. Other agencies, such as CATS in Charlotte, North Carolina, have established ordinances that prohibit violations of agency rules.

Advantages

- Bus operator perspective—increased perception of security and management support for operators; lets bus operators know that management is serious about their security.
- Customer perspective—lets customers know that the agency is serious about security and might not allow violations of their codes of conduct.
- Does not require significant investments in equipment or security personnel.

Disadvantages

- Agency perspective—agency needs to change the municipal or provincial ordinance to introduce legislation stating that an individual violating an agency's code of conduct might be banned from accessing the transit system for X days. This may take time and effort.
- Without support of the legal system and prosecutors in ensuring that offenders who try to access the system might be charged, the policy may not be effective.
- Larger systems may have difficulty enforcing the policy because identifying the banned individuals could be problematic.

Trena Few Testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Trena Few

Position: FWA

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February 15, 2025

Favorable, HB1144 -State Public Transit Service and Stations - Exclusion for Assault and Bodily Injury

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Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
BRITTANY GARRIS

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHN WALKER

Local 1949
JACOB STROMAN

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

Hello, my name is Trena Few. I am a member of the Transportation Division of SMART. I work as a Conductor for Amtrak and MARC with 15 years of service. I am urging a favorable report on **HB1144**.

While working on an Amtrak train in Wilmington, DE, a woman, running down the platform, came to me and asked is this train whatever. I replied to her no, this is not your train, we do not accept passengers at this location, we only let them off.

She immediately became belligerent. Swearing, cursing at me. She even spit on me. A conductor from another train, located across the platform from me radioed for police assistance. Being that the attack was unprovoked, if it weren't for him being there, I'm certain things would've escalated further.

As a Maryland resident, I fully support **HB1144**. The commuting public utilizing public transit service depends on us to get them to and from safely. When people feel that they can get away with doing anything they want, lawlessness takes hold. At which point it becomes impossible to do our jobs.

We as a State must send the message, that riding public transit service is a privilege. One that should not be abused. One that should be protected. Victims of assault should not have to face their attackers day after day after day as is currently the case.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge a favorable report!

Trena Few
Conductor
Member, SMART Transportation Division
Local 1470

HB1144 - LOI - MTA - State Public Transit Service

Uploaded by: Matt Mickler

Position: INFO

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.¹ 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

¹ 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.

The Honorable Marc Korman
Page Two

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,

Jalen Sanders
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