



Senate Finance

**HB 450: Maryland Transit Administration – Disability Reduced Fare Program –
Renewal for Permanently Disabled Individuals**

March 26, 2025

Position: Support

The Arc Maryland is a statewide advocacy organization for people with intellectual and developmental disabilities. We work to protect and advance the rights of people with disabilities and to make it possible for people with developmental disabilities to live the lives they want with the support they need. As such, we support HB 450 because we believe it will reduce unnecessary burdens for people with disabilities. In Maryland, 31% of individuals with disabilities own or drive a car, whether adapted or unadapted. This data suggests that approximately 69% of people with disabilities in Maryland do not drive.¹

WHAT currently happens with the Disability Reduced Fare Program in Maryland?

- People with disabilities are required to renew their eligibility for the Disability Reduced Fare Program every 3, 6, 9 months or 36 months (3 years), based on the judgement of a physician of how long the disability is expected to continue.
- All states are different in their processes for recertifying people with permanent disabilities. In both Washington DC and New York, individuals are required to recertify on at least a 5-year basis, while some states offer reduced fare transit for those with permanent disability status without the need for recertification²

WHAT does this legislation do?

¹ https://mdod.maryland.gov/pub/Documents/MDOD_SurveyData_2020-2023%20%282%29.pdf

² <https://www.whs.mil/Mass-Transportation-Benefit-Program/>
<https://www.valleytransit.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/Reduced-Fare-Brochure.pdf>

- HB 450 states that the administration shall **automatically renew the Disability Reduced Fare Program Certification of an Enrollee who is Permanently Disabled**, AND create and adopt regulations to establish a process to carry out processes for oversight and compliance.

WHY is this legislation important?

- Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities by definition are life-long conditions that manifest before the age of 22. Once diagnosed, the person only needs a doctor to confirm their diagnosis to continue to be eligible for the reduced fare program.
- Maryland currently has one of the shortest eligibility periods of most states. Having to go to the doctor to complete forms for a condition that is unchanged/permanent is both a time, transportation, and cost burden to people with disabilities.
- There is no fiscal note. Actually, this law change should reduce administrative paperwork and burden on the state by allowing people who have permanently, reduced-fare qualifying disabilities to hold a permanent reduced-fare card.

The Arc Maryland urges a favorable report on HB 450.

For additional information, please contact:

Ande Kolp, Executive Director

akolp@thearcmd.org