



March 5, 2025

The Honorable Pamela Beidle
Chair, Senate Finance Committee
3 East Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: Senate Bill 855, *Railroads – Safety Requirements (Maryland Railway Safety Act of 2025)*

Dear Chair Beidle:

Montgomery County strongly supports the passage of the Maryland Railway Safety Act. As our State and County continue to grow, so does the importance of ensuring the safety of our rail systems for passenger and freight trains. Recently, several devastating train accidents have occurred across the country, injuring families and sometimes discharging hazardous materials throughout communities. This legislation is a first step to ensure the safe passage of freight and passenger trains throughout Montgomery County.

The Maryland Railway Safety Act implements key safety measures to prevent disasters and protect communities. It requires a minimum two-person crew on freight trains, a proven safeguard already adopted in other states after fatal derailments. The bill also enhances hazardous materials tracking, ensuring first responders have real-time access to crucial information during emergencies. Additionally, it limits freight train lengths to 8,500 feet to reduce derailment risks and prevent extended road blockages that delay emergency services. We believe these provisions are essential steps in making Maryland's railways safer and more reliable for all.

We would like to thank our State leaders for their commitment to improving the lives of all residents in Montgomery County. For the reasons mentioned above, Montgomery County supports the passage of the Maryland Railway Safety Act. We look forward to Maryland being a leader in railway safety.

Sincerely,

Will Jawando
Council Vice President

Laurie-Anne Sayles
Councilmember, At-Large

Marc Elrich
County Executive

Kate Stewart
Council President

Natali Fani-Gonzalez
Councilmember, District 6

Gabe Albornoz
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Marilyn Balcome
Councilmember, District 2

Andrew Friedson
Councilmember, District 1

Evan Glass
Councilmember, At-Large

Dawn Luedtke
Councilmember, District 7

Sidney Katz
Councilmember, District 3

Kristin Mink
Councilmember, District 5

cc: Members of the Senate Finance Committee