



Testimony in Support of SB 472 With Amendment

March 21, 2025

The Maryland Transit Opportunities Coalition, a state-wide coalition of transit riders, transit advocates, and transit workers, urges a favorable report on SB 472 with one important substantive amendment and one clarifying amendment.

Taxing land near transit at a higher rate than structures will incentivize the construction of high-density homes and workplaces near transit. This advances several important public policy objectives:

- New apartments alleviate the housing shortage and lower housing costs.
- Living near transit makes housing more affordable because you don't need to pay for a car.
- Putting homes and jobs near transit reduces driving and lessens traffic congestion.
- Less driving improves the environment.
- The value created by rail transit could be captured to help fund the transit.

Unfortunately, the current version of SB 472 has a defect that threatens to make the bill ineffective and possibly counterproductive. Only unimproved land would be subject to the land tax. Exempting improved land from the tax would incentivize owners of unimproved land to quickly cover the land with low-density development, such as single-family detached houses, to escape the tax. This would be opposite to the objective of the bill, which is to promote dense development that fully captures the value created by transit.

We therefore urge you to **delete the word “unimproved” from the phrase “unimproved land.”**

We also ask you to clarify that all Purple Line stations are included by replacing “(iv) Metrorail system station in the State, including a Purple Line station ” with “(iv) Metrorail system station in the State, and (v) Purple Line station.”