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**HB 0932**

March 3, 2026

**TO:** Members of the House Appropriations Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director, Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** House Bill 932 – Maryland Transit Administration - Fifth Bus Division Facility - Construction

**POSITION: FAVORABLE**

Chair Barnes, Vice Chair Kaiser, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 932.

HB 932 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) and the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to collaborate on the funding and completion of the proposed Fifth Bus Division by June 30, 2032. The proposed Facility is the backbone of MTA's BMORE BUS, an ambitious ten-year plan aimed at improving the frequency, reliability, and coverage of bus service in the Baltimore metropolitan region.

As part of the 2025 Consolidated Transportation Program tour, elected officials raised concerns about the absence of funding for the Fifth Bus Division—a key component of BMORE BUS. While MTA has made great strides in terms of state-of-good-repair work—exemplified by the recent roll-out of new Subway cars and continued work on the Light Rail Modernization Project—it is essential that we go beyond addressing maintenance needs. It is essential that MDOT provides the support MTA needs to bring long-overdue expansion to central Maryland's transit system.

HB 932 directly targets concerns surrounding the lack of funding for the Fifth Bus Division by requiring its timely completion. The BMORE BUS plan cannot move forward without the Fifth Bus Division. The number of buses required to roll out service improvements cannot be supported by existing facilities alone. By providing additional capacity for the housing, maintenance, and fueling / charging of additional buses, the Fifth Bus Division will provide MTA the operational flexibility needed to implement the transformational BMORE BUS plan.

The sizeable investment called for by BMORE BUS is supported by the numbers. Of MTA's roughly 71 million trips in Fiscal Year 2025, a whopping 49.6 million took place on the core bus service being enhanced by BMORE BUS. For context—that figure exceeds the number of trips on MTA's Subway (5.6 million), Light Rail (5.5 million), commuter rail (4.7 million), and commuter bus (1.4 million)

services *combined*. Core bus service also provided more transit trips than Washington area Metrorail (22.9 million) or metrobus (37.7 million) during the same period. As the indisputable backbone of central Maryland's transit network, it is critical that core bus service is invested in accordingly.

In closing—the BMORE BUS plan outlines a bold vision for the future of transit in central Maryland. The plan will shorten wait times, reduce missed transfers, and deliver world-class bus service to the Baltimore metropolitan area. In doing this, MDOT must ensure that these transformative investments do not come at the expense of MTA's state-of-good-repair needs. Good public transit is the key to a sustainable, affordable, and equitable transportation system, and our spending priorities must begin to reflect that.

For the above stated reasons, the BCA respectfully request a **favorable** report on HB 932.