



**Montgomery County's Advocates for Better Transportation**

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Chair Ben Barnes  
And Members, House of Delegates Appropriations Committee  
120 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

February 6, 2025

**Re: SUPPORT for HB 386 - Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026**

Dear Chair Barnes and Members of the Appropriations Committee:

The Action Committee for Transit (ACT), a volunteer-led organization based in Montgomery County, supports HB 386 Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026. The ACT board and volunteers are united by a vision of socially and economically vibrant communities made possible by transit. WMATA Metro rail and bus are an irreplaceable part of that vision in reality, and it can be better. This legislation ensures WMATA has the money it needs adjusted for inflation starting in FY2029 to maintain a state-of-good repair and modernize outdated system infrastructure.

Riders remember the times before the 2018 capital funding deal. Delays were the rule instead of the exception, and station infrastructure was long overdue for repairs. The money provided to WMATA has been put to good use. On-time performance increased 26% since 2016, new and more reliable buses were purchased, power stations were upgraded, and tracks were replaced to prevent fires. This means more riders experience a frequent and safe Metro experience. I am one of those riders. It is not an exaggeration to say my life is made possible by Metro rail and bus. Trains and buses bring me to work, the grocery store, and to the people I love.

Our state's collective experience with WMATA has brought tangible benefits. Maryland Metro stations and bus stop areas generate \$2.6 billion in property taxes, and office vacancy rates near Metro are lower than office parks. Metro makes our state more economically competitive and helps Marylanders save thousands of dollars on transportation costs. Metro puts money into the state and keeps more money in the pockets of residents. That is what addressing the affordability concerns of Marylanders

in practice means.

Nevertheless, the achievements and future of Metro are at risk starting in FY2029 because the current funding formula is not indexed to inflation. WMATA debt financing will be exhausted by 2029. Important investments in new railcars and signal modernization will be stalled and even halted. We should not risk returning to a time when WMATA's infrastructure started to fail because the present seemed acceptable and the future was off in the distance. Success requires persistent work. WMATA's success is Maryland's success. ACT strongly recommends a positive report for HB 386.

Sincerely,

Michael Larkin  
Vice President, Action Committee for Transit