

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1300

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Proudly representing the transit workers of the MTA!



HB 932 - Maryland Transit Administration - Fifth Bus Division Facility - Construction Favorable

House Appropriations Committee
March 3rd, 2026

ATU Local 1300 represents over 3,000 transit workers at the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). This includes bus operators, bus mechanics, rail operators, rail maintenance workers, and more. Our members keep Maryland moving every day.

Last year, we partnered with dozens of organizations to come together and fight for additional dedicated revenues to the Transportation Trust Fund as part of the MOVE Maryland Coalition. At the time, we stated publicly that we needed to do even more to find dedicated revenue sources for Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) operations and capital. We did this because we knew the MTA needed the money to recover, grow, and expand to meet the future needs of this state. This was all apparent at the time.

Shortly after the 2025 session, where legislators and advocates successfully found hundreds of millions of dollars for the Transportation Trust Fund, MTA released its final Vision Plan for Bus Service in the Baltimore Region or "BMORE Bus." The plan was a commonsense proposal for the MTA to double down on delivering fast, frequent, and reliable bus service in the core service area. It directly responded to transit rider concerns by tackling their biggest frustrations. If you wanted a bus system that could reliably deliver the service you needed, then Baltimore needed BMORE Bus. But there were some glaring issues if you read between the lines that only highlighted how much Maryland has underinvested in the MTA.

MTA physically does not have the fleet storage capacity or workforce to carry out BMORE Bus. The plan calls for the building of a "fifth bus division" at the cost of \$650 million and may take years to complete. It would also require \$130 million annually in expanding the workforce and \$365 million in new bus purchases. MTA's own estimates anticipate at least 10 years for the full implementation of this plan, assuming that it is fully funded and approved today, but that is not the case. The current Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) currently only allocates a small portion of capital spending towards purchasing the land for a fifth bus division, but nothing for its design or construction. This means the project could be put on hold as the state seeks to find money in the couch cushions to actually start construction. The land may sit vacant as commuters and students struggle to get where they need to go. Practically, this means Baltimore area transit riders will need to wait a decade or more before it's even possible to get fast, frequent, and reliable transportation. Help isn't coming unless legislators act now.

Transit riders can't wait another decade. Transit riders can't cut other essential capital projects like the MTA light rail modernization project. Transit riders shouldn't be pitted against other transit riders in other parts of the state. Maryland should start by ramping up investment in the MTA now to cut down the ten year implementation timeline and deliver relief now. Maryland's transit riders still need two things, additional TTF revenues like we proposed last year (see list provided below) and redirecting money from expensive road projects elsewhere in the state. The price tag for Baltimore is less than a seventh of the cost of a new Bay Bridge.

Additional Transportation Funding Sources

The American Public Transit Association reports that, for every \$1 billion invested in public transit, there is a long-term economic impact of \$5 billion. This results in nearly 50,000 jobs either created or supported for every \$1 billion invested in transit. If this is the case, the question isn't whether transit is a good investment that ultimately pays for itself with economic dividends, but where to find the funds for initial investment costs.

Our union is supporting almost all of these revenue raises, including:

- Supplemental land value taxes around transit stations. This would be possible with 2025's HB 330 / SB 472 - Property Tax - Improvements to Property Adjacent to Rail Stations - Subclass, Special Rate, and Penalty. This approach allows Maryland to recapture some of the value generated by its own investments in transit.
- Supplemental statewide property taxes with dedicated revenues to transportation. 2025's HB 641 requires an approach like this and would allow for tackling major unfunded projects on the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) and their operating costs.
- Changes to the gas tax and associated programs to recoup funding lost through higher fuel efficiency vehicles. We are open to the idea of vehicle miles traveled proposals to accurately account for the cost of a vehicle's usage of Maryland roads.
- Increased penalties on speeding, dangerous, or reckless drivers and penalties on drivers that obscure their registration plates to avoid fines and tolls.
- Allowing counties to raise the maximum income tax level to relieve pressure and reliance on the State's transportation funding and LOTS budgets.
- State-led real estate development on transit-adjacent land with revenues explicitly dedicated to be reinvested into transit. WMATA has recently pioneered many joint development projects, but state lands near transit with recurring tenants could provide long term revenue instead of selling the land.
- A New Jersey style "transit tax" on big corporations with more than \$10 million in revenue. According to the Maryland Center on Economic Policy, our state generates a smaller share of its state and local revenue from taxing businesses than any other state. New Jersey estimates that with its 2.5% surcharge or raise to the corporate income tax on firms with more than \$10 million in revenue the state could raise an additional \$1 billion in revenue each year, coming from just 600 corporations. This money was explicitly dedicated to transit operations and capital projects.