



MARYLAND STATE & D.C. AFL-CIO

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SB 281 - Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026

Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

February 3, 2026

SUPPORT

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President

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Chairman and members of the Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of SB 281. On behalf of our 700 affiliated unions, I offer the following comments.

Metro's bus, rail, and paratransit services are paramount to our region's mobility. They connect workers to jobs, students to schools, individuals to appointments, and businesses to customers. A strong Metro system is good for Maryland.

These services drive economic growth and productivity, yet WMATA operated without dedicated funding for decades to support its system, putting our mass transit system at risk of deferred maintenance, safety incidents, underinvestment, and other failures. The \$500 million in dedicated capital funding pledged eight years ago by the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia was a crucial step in the right direction. However, that funding was not designed to increase or adjust for inflation.

SB 281 addresses this shortfall head-on by ensuring the long-term financial stability of WMATA's capital budget. At the same time, it protects Maryland's existing investments, strengthens the system's ability to address its needs, and positions the region to avoid failures as have occurred in the past. SB 281 is essential to safeguarding the transit infrastructure that thousands of residents rely on each and every day.

Additionally, SB 281 recognizes that Metro's workforce is essential to its success. The requirement that WMATA enter into workforce transition agreements is a necessary step as the agency approaches one of the first major high-profile automation transitions in Maryland. Thousands of workers have their livelihoods tied to a functioning, well-funded Metro system. Ensuring that these workers are protected is vital to ensure that



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technological advancements strengthen the people who keep Metro running, not undermine them.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on SB 281.



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