



TESTIMONY FOR SB0674

Transportation – Regional Transportation Authorities

Bill Sponsor: Senator Washington, A.

Committee: Budget and Tax

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: **FAVORABLE**

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0674 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

The Maryland Transportation Authority (MTA) has been making decisions on transportation projects and funding since 1971. Given the state of transportation in Maryland, it is more than time for another approach that engages the communities that our transportation system serves. The needs of Baltimore and its surrounding areas are very different to Southern Maryland or the big counties of Montgomery, Prince George's and Frederick. It makes sense that transportation directives should be more locally based.

This bill, if enacted, would allow for the creation of Regional Transportation Authorities (RTAs), which would develop and implement congestion relief plans for their respective regions. There are three RTAs envisioned – Baltimore Region (which includes Anne Arundel County, Baltimore County, and Baltimore City); Capital Region (which includes Frederick County, Montgomery County and Prince George's County); and Southern Maryland Region (which includes Calvert County, Charles County, and Saint Mary's County). It also establishes a fund for each of the RTAs.

Finally, it directs the Department of Transportation to report on the feasibility of creating local-option transportation revenues for the purpose of raising funds for the RTAs.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.