



SB0281 - SUPPORT  
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## SB0281 – Metro Funding Modification Act

Meeting of the Budget and Taxation Committee

February 3, 2026

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee, on behalf of Elders Climate Action Maryland, I urge a favorable report on SB0821.

Elders Climate Action is a nationwide organization devoted to ensuring that our children, grandchildren, and future generations have a world in which they can thrive. The Maryland Chapter has members across the state.

Each day, we see the climate crisis more clearly. We know that Maryland is at risk for sea level rise, flooding from intense rainfall, heat waves, and other extreme weather events.

We are particularly concerned about the effects of the transportation sector. It is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Maryland, and recent changes in Federal policy are making it much more difficult to cut emissions in that sector.

We are also acutely aware of the affordability challenges many Maryland households face. For those of us on fixed incomes, including many of our members, this is a growing concern. Transportation is the second-largest expense for Maryland households, so it plays a key role in affordability. Reliable, high-quality transit services are essential for many Marylanders, especially young people, elders, people with disabilities, and those with low or moderate incomes.

The Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) provides Metrorail and Metrobus service throughout the Washington DC metropolitan area. SB0281 provides WMATA capital funds to enable it to complete its transition to a rail signaling system and a fully automated train operations system, which are safer, less expensive, and more efficient.

The bill appropriately protects workers. Appropriations may be withheld if collective bargaining agreements have not been reached and worker protections not implemented. The Amalgamated Transit Union supports the bill.

In addition, SB0281 for the first time enables Maryland to provide its annual share of Metrorail's operating subsidy automatically, but only if Virginia and the District of Columbia also provide their shares. This is a huge step forward that will avoid WMATA's annual funding crisis and enable efficient long-range planning.

SB0281 is designed to fund DMV Moves, which affects all of the DC, Maryland, and Virginia (DMV) transit corridors and regional districts. Most importantly, it will move the DMV toward world-class, seamless transit. This investment plan allows WMATA to:

- Address ongoing repair, maintenance, and modernization of assets, systems, and technologies
- Deploy rail modernization, compatible fleet upgrades, and selective platform screen doors, all of which improve frequency, safety, and capacity
- Provide faster, more frequent, and more reliable bus service, including bus priority lanes and signals
- Provide all-day, all-week service that is better aligned with regional travel needs.

SB0281 will make transit more affordable, reliable, convenient, and safer. For all of these reasons, we strongly urge a favorable report on SB0821.

Thank you.