



Montgomery County

Office of Intergovernmental Relations

ROCKVILLE: 240-777-6550

ANNAPOLIS: 240-777-8274

HB 386

DATE: March 31, 2026

SPONSOR: Delegate Korman, et al.

ASSIGNED TO: Budget and Taxation

CONTACT PERSON: Melanie Wenger (melanie.wenger@montgomerycountymd.gov)

COUNTYY POSITION: Support

Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026

Montgomery County strongly supports House Bill 386, which requires the Governor to include an additional \$150 million beginning with the Fiscal Year 2029 budget to help support the capital costs of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), adjusted by 3% per year thereafter. The bill also includes a provision that allows for 35% of the funds to be withheld in any year that WMATA fails to appropriately manage staff reductions that may occur through rail automation. Because WMATA was created by an interstate compact, House Bill 386 cannot go into effect until both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia pass similar legislation to commit their share of funds to support WMATA capital investment.

If enacted by all three compact members, WMATA will be provided with the budgetary certainty necessary to invest in critical state of good repair upgrades. Regional leaders have worked for the past two years to prioritize the most urgent and important needs. Additionally, leaders agreed that the funds must grow annually to keep pace with inflation in order for WMATA to operate the system and upgrade aging equipment based on the goal of being able to offer a modern, world-class transit system for those living, doing business, and visiting in the Washington region. As active participants in the regional work group called *DMV Moves*, the County wants to emphasize that the total capital funding levels requested in House Bill 386 are significantly reduced from WMATA's original request. Through a combination of budgetary efficiencies and prioritizing only the most critical investments, the regional leaders endorsed this funding level as necessary to keep the system modernized.

The Maryland D.C. suburbs rely on Metrorail to support a large volume of its traveling public. Ensuring that the transit systems operating in the suburbs are running efficiently supports the suburbs' and State's goals for providing multimodal transportation choices that can effectively move people, mitigate climate impacts, and support land use changes that direct development around transit nodes. If the public loses confidence in the system because a lack of investment renders it unreliable or unsafe, it will be viewed as a last option, and a dysfunctional system will be a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because of the investments that have been made, that outcome has been avoided so far, with rider satisfaction at some of the highest levels observed in WMATA's history. In order to maintain this momentum, continued investment is required since a high functioning system is necessary for so many reasons, including as an economic driver for the region and the State.

For these reasons, Montgomery County respectfully requests that the Budget and Taxation Committee advance House Bill 386.