



# Montgomery County

## Office of Intergovernmental Relations

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**SB 281**

**DATE: February 3, 2026**

**SPONSOR: Senator Augustine and Feldman**

**ASSIGNED TO: Budget and Taxation Committee**

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

**POSITION: Support (Montgomery County Department of Transportation)**

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### **Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026**

This bill requires the Governor to include an additional \$150 million in the Fiscal Year 2029 annual budget to provide grants to the Washington Suburban Transit Commission to pay the capital costs of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA). The bill requires that this amount increase by 3% each subsequent year and gives the Governor the authority to withhold up to 35% of the funds if WMATA does not mitigate staff reductions associated with rail automation. The bill cannot go into effect until both the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia pass similar legislation to address their portion of funding for WMATA.

The Metro Funding Modification Act of 2026 provides the budgetary certainty for WMATA to invest in necessary state of good repair upgrades. The region has worked for the past two years to prioritize the most urgent and important needs, and this bill represents Maryland's role in funding to advance these needs. Additionally, leaders agreed that the funds must grow annually to allow the funds to continue to keep pace with inflation. The region agreed that these improvements will allow WMATA to keep the system operating and upgrade aging equipment to provide a modern, world-class transit system for the District of Columbia, Maryland, and Virginia. As active participants in the regional work group DMVMoves, we want to emphasize that the total capital funding levels requested in Senate Bill 281 are significantly reduced from WMATA's original request. Through a combination of budgetary efficiencies and prioritizing only the most critical investments, the regional partners (including the County) endorse this funding level as necessary to keep the system modernized.

The County relies on Metrorail to support a large volume of the traveling public. Ensuring that the transit systems operating in the County are running smoothly supports the County and State's goals for multimodal transportation choices that keeps Marylanders moving, mitigation of climate impacts, and supporting land use changes focused on densifying around transit nodes. Without investment in capital improvements and state of good repair, the public loses confidence in transit as a viable mode of travel. Rider satisfaction is at some of the

highest levels observed in WMATA's history and this can be tied to the investments made that are resulting in a system that is reliable and safe. If the system is not adequately funded, this stands to hurt all of Maryland, as WMATA's Metrorail stations are a key piece of economic development for the region and the State.

We respectfully request that the Budget and Taxation Committee issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 281.