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House Economics Matters Committee

**House Bill 894 - Land Use - Transit-Oriented Development - Alterations
(Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act)**

Letter of Support

March 3, 2026

Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee:

Bowie State University is in strong support of HB 894, the Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act. This legislation comes at a pivotal time for our University, the State, and Prince George's County as we actively advance transit-oriented development (TOD) at the Bowie State MARC Station.

In 2024, the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT), Bowie State University, and Prince George's County executed a Memorandum of Understanding establishing a cooperative partnership to develop the area surrounding the Bowie State MARC Station. This partnership reflects a shared commitment to transforming underutilized, transit-adjacent land into a vibrant mixed-use community that supports students, residents, and employers.

MDOT has issued a Request for Proposals to select a joint development partner to lead master planning and redevelopment of approximately 4.63 acres of State-owned land at the station. MDOT has committed \$1.5 million to advance master planning and associated infrastructure improvements, including a MARC platform extension, a new pedestrian bridge connecting directly to campus, and enhanced bicycle and pedestrian access. The project also received \$250,000 in federal Community Project Funding secured through the leadership of Congressman Glenn Ivey and Senator Angela Alsobrooks to support continued advancement.

At the same time, the Revenue Authority of Prince George's County has issued its own Request for Proposals for a 93-acre, county-owned site adjacent to the station to create a multi-phased, mixed-use "Campus Village." The County has earmarked \$1 million for infrastructure and due diligence work and envisions an amenity-rich community integrating housing, commercial, recreational, and institutional uses while preserving and highlighting the natural landscape, including proximity to the nearby Patuxent Research Refuge. Together, the State and County

projects represent a coordinated, transformative opportunity centered on Bowie State University and the MARC station.

House Bill 894 will directly support and accelerate this work.

The bill addresses two of the principal barriers to successful TOD: zoning constraints and project financing. It provides flexibility around parking requirements near high-frequency rail transit, encourages mixed-use development, and allows MDOT to lead development planning on Department-owned land contiguous to transit in coordination with local jurisdictions. These tools are critical where State and County land, regional transit assets, and a public university intersect.

The legislation also strengthens project feasibility by incorporating locally designated TOD areas into the State's Enterprise Zone program, delaying the imposition of impact fees until construction is complete, and prioritizing TOD on State-owned transit-adjacent land for funding under the Strategic Infrastructure Revolving Loan Fund.

For Bowie State, these provisions are not abstract policy changes—they directly affect whether this coordinated State and County effort succeeds. As master planning advances on both the 4.63-acre State site and the adjacent 93-acre County site, financial feasibility will determine how quickly housing, student-serving retail, research and innovation space, and community amenities can be delivered. Flexibility on parking, access to incentives, and reduced upfront cost burdens will significantly improve the viability of development that supports student housing, workforce housing, and expanded economic opportunities connected to the University.

HB 894 will help Bowie State University fully leverage its unique position as a transit-adjacent institution and anchor for this emerging corridor. By aligning State policy with the realities of delivering TOD at the Bowie State MARC Station, this legislation will strengthen campus connectivity, expand housing options, and enhance the University's economic impact in Prince George's County.

For these reasons, Bowie State University respectfully requests a favorable report on House Bill 894.

Thank you for your consideration. For questions, please contact Michael Harrison, Director of Government and Community Relations, Bowie State University, at mlharrison@bowiestate.edu.