

March 3, 2026

he Honorable Marc Korman, Chair
The Honorable Michele Guyton, Vice Chair
House Environment and Transportation Committee
Taylor House Office Building, Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 1242 – Transportation of Persons With Disabilities - Transportation Network Companies - Requirements – FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Korman, Vice Chair Guyton, and Members of the Environment & Transportation Committee,

I would like to begin by thanking Delegate Allen for sponsoring this important legislation. HB 1242 represents a vital step toward modernizing Maryland’s paratransit system to better serve residents with disabilities while ensuring fiscal responsibility for Maryland taxpayers.

Under the current system, paratransit fleets often operate at capacity, leading to leaving Maryland residents stranded for hours at a time waiting to be picked up by their service. HB 1242 provides the tools to manage peak demand and reduce missed trips. Traditional paratransit trips cost the MTA approximately \$64.41 per trip. Shifting just 20% of these trips to a TNC-supplemented model could save the State \$24 million annually.

It takes a forward-thinking approach to explore these regulatory updates to make these changes that save the tax payer money and modernizing this framework positions Maryland alongside other innovative, large-scale agencies like WMATA and MBTA that have successfully utilized Transportation Network Companies (TNCs) to drive down costs and reduce rider wait times.

HB 1242:

- removes certain administrative requirements designed for direct employees while mandating comprehensive annual background screenings.
- These annual checks meet some of the highest security standards in the transportation industry.

This model is being used by over 18,000 residents in Maryland already through the WMATA program. Meanwhile, Pennsylvania similarly has a program which also reduces wait times and saves costs. The current framework has great intentions but is costing the tax payer millions of dollars, while preventing paratransit customers

from being picked up from their dialysis appointments in a timely manner. already successful in neighboring jurisdictions like D.C. and Pennsylvania—Maryland can provide more efficient, reliable, and cost-effective transit for those who need it most.

I respectfully urge a FAVORABLE vote on HB 1242.

LaVita Gardner
Manager, Public Policy
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