

DEPARTMENT OF AGING & TRANSPORTATION



Queen  
Anne's  
County

**County Commissioners:**

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*Anne M. Sparks, Director*

Bill: House Bill 1344: Maryland Transit Administration – Locally Operated Transit Systems – Study

Position: Support

Dear Chair Korman, Vice-Chair Guyton, and Members of the Committee:

Queen Anne's County – County Ride is the public transit system for Queen Anne's County; we run both fixed deviated routes and a door-to-door service. Our service area encompasses all of Queen Anne's County along with parts of Kent, Caroline, Talbot, and Anne Arundel counties. Our ridership is 30% workforce rides, 25% medical rides, and 20% senior rides.

In the last few years our operating funding from the state has been flat, yet we have rising costs in wages and benefits. The state capital funds have been cut even with the rising cost of the buses we need to purchase on the state contracts. We have had a need to purchase 3 buses due to old buses being past their useful life but with the rising cost we could only get 1.

We have seen in Queen Anne's County our ridership grow, especially for workforce rides. We know that we are an essential need for our county, and it is becoming more expensive to offer this service. I believe that HB 1344 will provide the data needed to show the issues in our county along with the state facing transit. I am excited that this committee is taking the needed steps to resolve this through collecting the critical information and understanding the scope of the problem to fix the problem. HB1344 helps identify the funding shortfalls and will help with future local transit funding. The passing of HB1344 can help us to assure adequate state resources and funding that will allow us to better serve the residents of not only Queen Anne's County but the entire state of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Steve Palmer  
Transit Administrator, Queen Anne's County