



NATIONAL FEDERATION
OF THE BLIND
MARYLAND

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To: House Committee on Environment and Transportation

The members of the National Federation of the Blind of Maryland urge the House Environment and Transportation Committee to give a favorable report with amendment to HB0018. This bill establishes a minimum dollar amount for network transportation companies to pay their operators.

Without amendment, this bill is particularly problematic for several reasons:

1. It requires companies to pay a higher rate for wheelchair or otherwise accessible vehicles, which will certainly be passed onto passengers who need such vehicles; charging a higher amount for accessible transportation violates the Americans with Disabilities Act.
2. The minimum fee for any ride disproportionately impacts passengers with disabilities, who often need to go short distances. Such a minimum fee will necessarily result in higher transportation costs for individuals with disabilities, many of whom are already on fixed incomes.

Amendment 1: Explicitly state that Network Transportation Companies may not pass on the additional cost for wheelchair or otherwise accessible vehicles to the passenger.

Amendment 2: Strike the minimum per trip cost of \$5.

For those reasons, we ask for a favorable report conditional on the above amendments on HB0018. For questions, please contact me at President@nfbmd.org or at 443-426-4110.