



Testimony Presented to the Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

Hearing Date – February 17, 2026, Finance – Education, Energy and the Environment Subcommittee

Senate Bill 389 – Land Use – Transit Oriented Development – Alterations (Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act)

Position – Support

I am Jon Laria, testifying today as Chair of the Baltimore Regional Transit Commission (BRTC). The BRTC was created by the Maryland General Assembly to provide oversight and advocacy for the Baltimore regional transit system operated by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA). Our commission ensures diverse stakeholder perspectives are represented in agency decisions, including representatives from local government, transportation, industry, business, transit riders, transit advocates, labor, and the Moore-Miller Administration. Our focus extends beyond transit infrastructure to the broader economic opportunities that transit provides, promotes, and creates.

The BRTC supports Senate Bill 389, the Maryland Transit and Housing Opportunity Act of 2026, which promotes and incentivizes transit-oriented development (TOD) in Maryland. In fact, the BRTC recently created a workgroup focused on TOD to assess, encourage, and support TOD efforts in the Baltimore region.

Senate Bill 389, introduced at the Governor's request, leverages Maryland's investments in public transit by promoting TOD at or near locations where the State has invested or will invest in transit facilities and infrastructure. TOD capitalizes on the economic and social benefits of growth concentrated around public transit hubs, and the Baltimore region stands to benefit from provisions that streamline zoning and prioritize redevelopment of State-owned land. TOD holds special promise to help address Maryland's notable housing shortage and costs, particularly by transforming State-owned land adjacent to transit.

The Moore-Miller Administration and the General Assembly have previously taken important steps to encourage TOD and SB 389 demonstrates a continued commitment to TOD and its many benefits. We are grateful to the Maryland Department of Transportation for its ongoing collaboration with local governments in furtherance of TOD, and trust the final bill will balance State and local government interests in achieving the widely-shared goal of driving critical additional investments around our region's transit facilities.

The BRTC strongly supports the economic opportunities SB 389 will create for Maryland, and urges your favorable consideration. We appreciate the opportunity to provide input and remain available for further discussion.

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