

Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority  
Public Testimony in Support of SB 936 - FAVORABLE

Vehicle Laws – Bus Obstruction Monitoring Systems & Bus Stop Zones  
Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
4 March 2026



Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the committee, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I am a Project Manager in the Government Relations Office at the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA, or Metro), and I am here to urge this committee's support for Senate Bill 936. This bill establishes a commonsense safety measure that supports bus service for Marylanders across the state: camera-enforced bus stop zones.

**Camera-Enforced Bus Lanes Support Fast & Reliable Bus Service**

In 2024, the Maryland General Assembly authorized transit agencies' use of bus *lane* enforcement technology – bus-mounted cameras that capture the license plates of drivers obstructing buses in bus lanes – so that drivers can be ticketed for illegally driving, stopping, or parking in designated bus lanes. In the absence of separated busways that physically divide buses from cars, this type of enforcement is essential; it makes the red paint on the asphalt meaningful to drivers, and when applied over sufficiently long stretches of road, it facilitates faster and more reliable bus service. In Washington, DC, where camera-enforced bus lanes are already in effect on more than 14 miles of bus lanes, median bus speeds in enforced lanes were 1 percent faster in 2025 than in 2023; meanwhile, DC-wide bus speeds slowed down by 12 percent in the same period. This means buses in enforced bus lanes performed 13 percentage points better than buses outside bus lanes – which translates to minutes of transit time saved for thousands of bus riders, and reliable service that customers can depend on for daily travel.

Once camera-enforced bus lanes are operational in Maryland in Montgomery & Prince George's Counties and Baltimore City, many bus riders in this state, too, will benefit from the time savings and reliability made possible when buses are not constantly stuck in traffic. However, the enforcement of bus lanes alone is not enough to ensure that everyone can benefit from fast and efficient bus service.

**Bus Stop Zone Enforcement is an Imperative Safety Measure**

Maryland has yet to authorize the use of bus-mounted camera enforcement in bus stop zones, the curbside area immediately surrounding bus stops. This means that drivers may drive, park, and idle at bus stops without consequences. When this happens while

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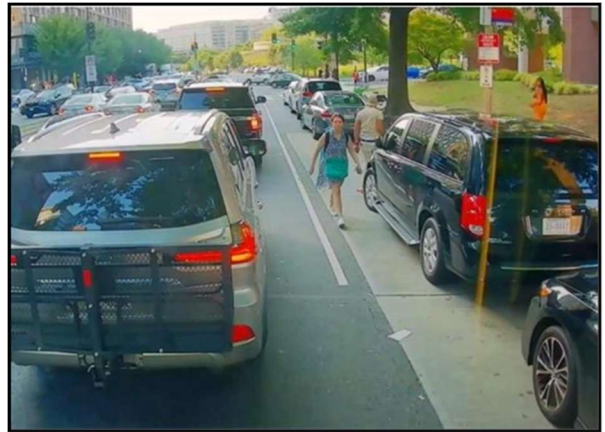
300 7th Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20024  
202-962-1234

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Maryland and Virginia  
Transit Partnership*

a bus is approaching the bus stop, a number of unsafe scenarios unfold – for drivers and for transit riders:

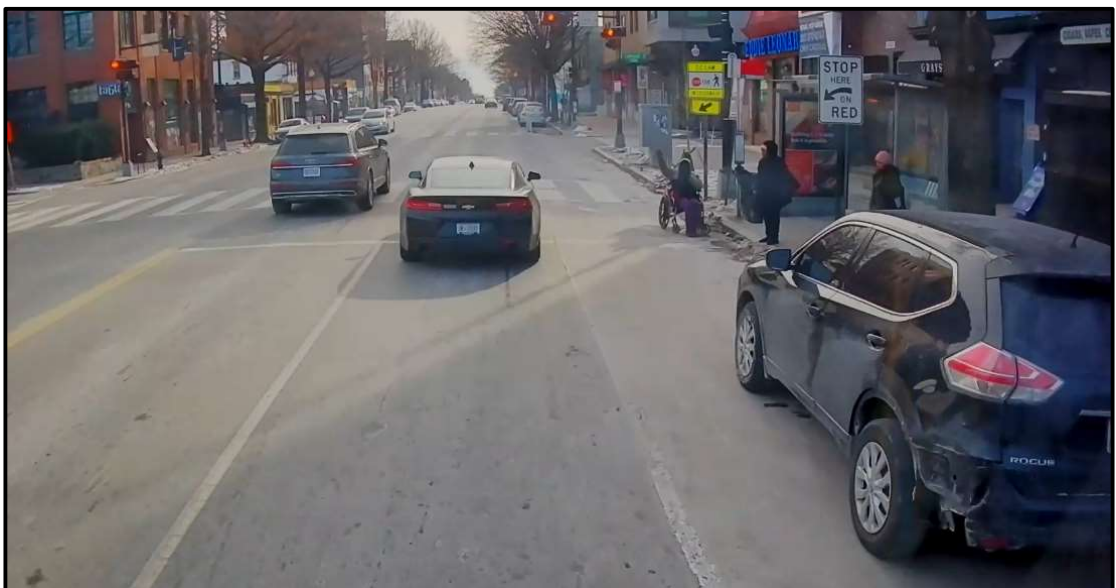
- 1) The bus is forced to obstruct traffic by stopping in the travel lane, causing drivers to behave erratically,
- 2) Disembarking and boarding customers are forced to walk into the street – and potentially moving traffic – to access the curb or board the bus, and
- 3) Operators cannot deploy the ADA ramp for customers in wheelchairs, or customers pushing strollers or carts, making boarding or disembarking treacherous at best, and physically impossible at worst.



*Left: A vehicle stopped at a bus stop at Ellsworth Drive & Georgia Avenue in Silver Spring forces customers to walk into the street to board the bus.*

*Right: A WMATA employee walks into traffic in Southwest DC to board a bus that was unable to reach the bus stop due to stopped and parked cars.*

*Below: A wheelchair user waits to board the bus in the street, due to a driver obstructing the bus stop at Georgia Avenue & Lamont Street in Northwest DC.*



As it stands, a single driver can create this disruption for *all* road users (including other drivers) and dozens of bus riders (including people in wheelchairs, people with vision impairments, elderly people, and people pushing children in strollers) without any consequences.

The burden of such disruption weighs heavily on people who rely on transit for their daily trips, a population that is disproportionately elderly, disproportionately disabled, and disproportionately low-income. Survey studies can help illuminate the human impacts of policy choices that make transit unviable for the people who need it most. A 2022 survey of travel behavior found that about 60 percent of American adults aged 18 to 64 with travel-limiting disabilities take fewer trips than they would like to, meaning that a lack of viable and safe transportation options forces adults with disabilities to skip trips to visit friends & family, shop, recreate, and more ([US DOT Bureau of Transportation Statistics](#)). A 2022 study found that 20 percent of American adults aged 65 or over who live in metropolitan areas are reliant on public transit to see their regular doctor ([Journal of the American Geriatrics Society](#)). A single car idling at a single bus stop – preventing the use of the wheelchair ramp or safe access from the sidewalk – is enough to preclude bus transportation as a viable option for a person with a disability visiting a friend, or an elderly person going to the doctor, or even a child taking transit to school.

Data demonstrates that full bus lane *and* stop enforcement make a real difference. In DC, when District Department of Transportation staff began issuing warnings to drivers using bus-mounted camera technology, bus stop violations fell from 22,500 in October 2023 to 15,200 in October 2024 – a 32 percent reduction in instances of bus stops being blocked by illegal stopping, standing, and parking: ADA ramp deployment rates can also provide a measure of the success of automatic bus stop enforcement: stops on routes with bus-mounted cameras saw a 27 percent increase in ADA ramp use by buses in 2025 compared to 2023, while non-enforced bus stops saw a 10 percent growth of ADA ramp use over the same period. This suggests that when bus stops are unobstructed, the ADA ramp can be deployed more effectively for those who need it.

Similar patterns emerge in Maryland. For a pilot demonstration of the potential impact of bus lane and stop enforcement on bus corridors in Maryland, Metro collected data on dedicated bus lane and bus stop infractions along 7 lane miles of Georgia Avenue in Montgomery County. Over the course of the approximately 6-month pilot from July 2024 to December 2024, two buses with enforcement cameras detected almost 800 events of non-permitted vehicles stopped at 45 Georgia Avenue bus stops. At a single stop, the northbound bus stop at Georgia Avenue and Ellsworth Drive in Silver Spring, bus-

mounted enforcement cameras detected 95 events – or 12 percent of the total events recorded during the pilot. With the technology only on two Metro Buses, these numbers represent an undercount of the true reality faced by bus riders and bus operators on Georgia Avenue in Montgomery County. These events – each of them creating a hazardous environment for bus riders and motorists alike – are not inevitable. Full implementation of bus lane and stop enforcement in Maryland would reduce these events for bus riders across the state, beyond Metro’s customers.

Across the state, Maryland has already taken an important first step through the installation of dedicated bus infrastructure, like painted bus lanes and traffic signal priority, that supports mobility and reduces congestion. But data demonstrates that these investments are not enough. This assembly should maximize the return on its investments by fully unlocking the efficiency *and* safety benefits that come with bus-mounted camera enforcement of bus lanes and bus stop zones. I urge your favorable report of Senate Bill 936, to ensure that *all* Marylanders can reap the benefits of reliable bus service – not just those who are willing and able to walk through traffic to board and disembark the bus.