

Department of Legislative Services
 Maryland General Assembly
 2020 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
 Enrolled - Revised

House Bill 1236

(Delegate Solomon, *et al.*)

Environment and Transportation

Budget and Taxation

Transit - Maryland Area Regional Commuter Train - Expansion of Service

This bill requires the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) to (1) negotiate in good faith with various entities to reach written agreements to extend MARC train service to Virginia and Delaware, as specified; (2) by December 1 of each year, submit a report related to the negotiations to specified committees of the General Assembly; and (3) conduct a feasibility study on constructing a rail connection between Penn Station and Camden Station, as specified, and submit a report of its findings and recommendations to specified committees of the General Assembly by December 1, 2021. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2020, and terminates June 30, 2022.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Transportation Trust Fund (TTF) expenditures increase by *as much as* \$1.5 million annually in both FY 2021 and 2022, as discussed below. Revenues are not affected.

(in dollars)	FY 2021	FY 2022	FY 2023	FY 2024	FY 2025
Revenues	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
SF Expenditure	1,500,000	1,500,000	0	0	0
Net Effect	(\$1,500,000)	(\$1,500,000)	\$0	\$0	\$0

Note: () = decrease; GF = general funds; FF = federal funds; SF = special funds; - = indeterminate increase; (-) = indeterminate decrease

Local Effect: The bill does not directly affect local government operations or finances.

Small Business Effect: Minimal.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The reports related to MARC service must (1) summarize the best efforts and discussions undertaken to comply with the bill; (2) identify solutions to any issues with establishing the expanded MARC train service; (3) if necessary, list the statutory changes necessary to establish the expanded service; and (4) provide any other information that MTA deems necessary for successful run-through service.

Current Law/Background: MTA operates a comprehensive transit system throughout the Baltimore-Washington metropolitan area, including more than 50 local bus lines in Baltimore and other services such as the light rail, Baltimore Metro subway, commuter buses, MARC trains, and mobility/paratransit vehicles. MTA is also responsible for hundreds of transit stations.

MARC commuter train service operates three different lines that serve several Maryland counties; Washington, DC; and Martinsburg, West Virginia: (1) the Brunswick Line; (2) the Camden Line; and (3) the Penn Line. In December 2013, MARC began to offer weekend service on the Penn Line; the other lines offer service only on weekdays and select holidays. MARC service is provided by running State-owned MARC trains on existing Amtrak railways owned by CSX. MTA and the Virginia Railway Express are currently exploring the potential for MARC to extend service to Northern Virginia.

[The MARC Cornerstone Plan](#) addresses a 30-year planning period and identifies capital improvements needed to maintain a state of good repair for the MARC system. The plan also outlines capital needs required to improve and expand service.

State Expenditures: TTF expenditures increase by as much as \$1.5 million annually in both fiscal 2021 and 2022 for consulting, legal, project management, correspondence, and planning costs related to the discussions and negotiations and required reports. The estimate reflects an extensive amount of negotiations taking place over the two-year period; costs may be less to the extent that MTA, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Virginia, and CSX are able to come to an agreement more quickly; however, any such possibility cannot be reliably predicted.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 3, 2020
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