



TESTIMONY TO THE SENATE EDUCATION, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

SB 123 Maryland Transportation Authority - Video Streaming and Archiving - Open Meetings

POSITION: Support

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The League of Women Voters has long believed that a democratic government depends upon informed and active participation at all levels of government. The League further believes that governmental bodies must protect the citizen's right to know by giving adequate notice of proposed actions, holding open meetings and making public records accessible.

SB 123 requires the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) to publicly stream a live video of each open meeting that is held at its headquarters or any other location where it held at least 10 meetings during the immediately preceding calendar year. It also requires making archives of complete and unedited video recordings of meetings available to the public, on-line, for a minimum of four years after the meeting date. In addition, SB 123 expressly requires MDTA to prepare written minutes of each meeting.

Allowing citizens to be informed about the proceedings of this agency is important because MTA is responsible for constructing, managing, operating, and improving the State's toll facilities (for example, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and Intercounty Connector) and for financing new revenue-producing transportation projects. The public has the right to know about the process for these critical decisions.

The League of Women Voters of Maryland urges a favorable report on SB 123.