



# CHESAPEAKE BAY FOUNDATION

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*Environmental Protection and Restoration  
Environmental Education*

## **Senate Bill 199**

Maryland Transit Administration - Funding (Transit Safety and Investment Act)

Date: January 27, 2021

Position: Support

To: Senate Budget & Taxation Committee

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Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) **SUPPORTS** SB 199, which would provide funds needed to support Maryland's transit systems in pursuit of climate and clean water goals.

### **Transit reduces pollution that would otherwise damage our climate and our waterways.**

Maryland has committed to cut nitrogen pollution by 15% within the next five years and greenhouse gas emissions by 40% by 2030. At the same time, the state must ensure that residents, businesses and institutions have access to a variety of safe and dependable transportation choices. Robust public transportation, from light rail and metro to buses and rural shuttle service, provides access while supporting goals to reduce carbon and nitrogen emissions that would otherwise impair our waterways and harm our climate.

### **SB 199 would address deteriorating system conditions brought to light by prior General Assembly action.**

In 2018, the General Assembly required the Maryland Transit Administration to assess its capital needs on a three-year rolling basis. The first of these reports reveals an unfunded \$2 billion backlog of deferred maintenance and important system upgrades. SB 199 builds on the General Assembly's prior actions to ensure that MTA has access to capital funding that is in step with system needs. The bill would result in an average increase of about 35% for capital projects required to keep the systems safe, dependable and in service to the needs of Maryland's residents and businesses.

### **Maryland must invest in safe and dependable transit to fulfill climate and clean water commitments.**

When system reliability and access suffer, public transit becomes a less effective alternative to higher-polluting transportation modes, such as highways. Maryland's Clean Water Blueprint relies on – and in fact assumes – stable, ongoing control of airborne sources of nitrogen pollution to the Chesapeake Bay. Chronic funding shortfalls for our public transit systems threaten this assumption and compound the challenges posed by recent Federal rollbacks to clean air protections in the transportation sector. SB 199 ensures that Maryland's public transit system continues to support efforts to meet clean water and climate goals.

### **CBF urges the Committee's FAVORABLE report on SB 199.**

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The Chesapeake Bay Foundation (CBF) is a non-profit environmental education and advocacy organization dedicated to the restoration and protection of the Chesapeake Bay. With over 300,000 members and e-subscribers, including over 109,000 in Maryland alone, CBF works to educate the public and to protect the interest of the Chesapeake and its resources.