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The Honorable Guy Guzzone and
Members of the Senate Budget & Tax Committee

RE: Support SB-199

REPRESENTATIVES

CUMBERLAND
Local 430
VACANT

Local 600
JASON WEAVER

BRUNSWICK
Local 631
TOM CAHILL

EDMONSTON
Local 1470
KENZELL CRAWFORD

BALTIMORE
Local 610
JOHNNY WALKER

Local 1949
ERIC BILSON

As State Legislative Director for the Transportation Division of the International Association of Sheet Metal, Air, Rail and Transportation Worker's I am urging your committee to **support SB-199**, "*Maryland Transit Administration - Funding (Transit Safety and Investment Act)*."

SB-199 would require the Governor to include certain appropriations in the State budget from the Transportation Trust Fund to the Maryland Transit Administration. The MTA funding has been reduced over the past several years and has resulted in an unreliable system in disrepair. The increase in dedicated funding to the MTA is sorely needed to update and improve the operating and capital needs of the system.

A successful transit system requires that the traveling public can get to and from their jobs, their appointments, and other travel needs on time and conveniently. When the system is unreliable as a result of operational and mechanical problems, ridership suffers. More importantly, the traveling public who have no other choice for transportation are inconvenienced and sometimes put in precarious positions or even stranded.

A successful transit system is good for the environment. The number one emitter of greenhouse gases is the automobile. The number one complaint from the traveling public is roadway congestion. The proper investment in transit systems goes a long way towards helping to solve these problems by reducing the number of automobiles on the road which in turn reduces congestion and pollution.

A successful transit system provides many good paying jobs with health care benefits and a good pension for their workers.

A successful transit system is great for businesses by improving the business climate as it expands the pool of employees, expands the public's access to the businesses and reduces sprawl when transit-oriented development projects locate based on access to a successful transit system.

A successful transit system requires foresight and the proper level of investment. SB-199 is a great start to turning the Maryland transit system into a success!

We urge your support and a favorable report on SB-199.

Sincerely,

Lawrence E. Kasecamp
MD State Legislative Director
SMART Transportation Division