

Justin Gallardo
SB0199
Favorable
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Testimony on SB0199
Maryland Transit Administration – Funding (Transit Safety and Investment Act)
Budget & Taxation

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for receiving this testimony in support of SB0199. As a resident of Parkville, Maryland in Baltimore County, I am fortunate to have a car. This is my primary mode of transportation for my source of income – delivery driving. 3 years ago, I was an employee of Shuttle UM and understood the importance of public transportation in our 21st Century economy as well as its cornerstone in providing a functional economy. While we are in a housing crisis and multifamily housing construction is more evident in suburbs like Parkville, Towson, and Perry Hall – it comes with the coexisting urgency for efficient public transit. Public transit mitigates the expenses that would adversely affect low-income, people of color, and disabled residents.

While I was a student at University of Maryland, College Park, I depended greatly on public transit as I was able to finish school, get to my job, and attend other functions. Even in my relatively modest income neighborhood, I notice that public transportation is greatly important for the local economy to thrive. I live directly north of Oak Crest retirement community and many employees walk two miles by foot from the bus stop on Harford Road. Many of our grocery stores and convenient stores are staffed by residents of Baltimore City who depend on MTA buses to get to work. In fact, I hope more MTA funding comes to improve transportation connecting the Joppa Road corridor as more and more Americans depend on suburban-to-suburban transportation.

From the COVID-19 pandemic to the Black Lives Matter protests last summer, we are seeing how economically segregated our country is and how sensitive the economy is – it does not have to be like this. In our 21st Century economy, we need to recognize that we can have a thriving economy with a clean environment and systems that will help those who are disadvantaged. Not everyone can afford an automobile and that is not always a feasible option for many households. We cannot allow system that put more people into debt, while adversely damaging our climate.

I ask for a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation!

Thank You,
Justin Gallardo