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SB 199

January 20, 2021

TO: Members of the Budget and Tax Committee

FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director of Government Relations

RE: SENATE BILL 199 - Maryland Transit Administration - Funding (Transit Safety and Investment Act)

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill (SB) 199.

Senate Bill 199 looks to significantly increase the Maryland Transportation Administration's (MTA) capital budget through fiscal year 2028. The increased capital budget would be allocated from the State of Maryland's Transportation Trust Fund. The bill specifies that increased capital dollars would be in addition to capital money already set aside for MTA's Purple Line light rail project.

Ensuring that MTA receives adequate funding is critical to both Greater Baltimore's and the State of Maryland's Economy. Despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, MTA's continues to serve as a vital means of transportation for hundreds of thousands of Marylanders each day. Riders include people going to school, work, visiting family, and conducting important errands. MTA's most recently published Capital Needs Inventory (CNI) report identifies a \$2 billion capital funding gap split evenly between state of good repair needs and system enhancement needs. Ensuring that MTA provides safe, affordable and reliable transportation is extremely important to both residents and businesses alike.

Though MTA is a state agency, it is worth noting that its core service area is the Baltimore Metropolitan Area. Recent census estimates put the population of the Baltimore Metropolitan Area at over 2.8 million people. Adequate investment in MTA is necessary for Greater Baltimore to realize its full transportation potential and prosper equitably with other regions of the state.

We respectfully request a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 199.

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