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Executive Director

March 23, 2021

Hon. Paul G. Pinsky  
Chairman

Senate Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee  
2 West, Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

### **OPPOSE - HB 656**

*Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Bus Stops*

Dear Chairman Pinsky,

On behalf of the Transportation Association of Maryland (TAM), we wish to notify the Senate Education, Health, & Environmental Affairs Committee of our **OPPOSITION** for **HB 656 - Election Law – Early Voting Centers – Bus Stops**.

The Transportation Association of Maryland is a 501(c)(3) organization representing 104+ member organizations and 20,000+ individual members. TAM is the legislative voice and vigilant eyes and ears of the transportation industry in Maryland. TAM's mission is to strengthen community transportation in Maryland through advocacy and professional development.

TAM members' bus routes are scientifically planned to service our customers in the most efficient and safe manner possible. Timings are precise down to the minute in an effort to provide the greatest possible time-on-target service and reliability. Many of our agencies use timed transfers between routes. Adding additional stops that could require our member agencies to deviate up to one mile from the normal route could impose cascading service disruptions and delays. These delays can be magnified by the location of these early voting locations if they require excessive left turns, have small entrances not suited for large buses, or are situated in heavy traffic urban environments.

Seemingly small changes can result in major delays for our other customers, whose needs will continue during any early voting period. Additionally, this bill mandates service during hours when certain routes may not be in operation, or when the entire service may be out of operation as is often the case on weekends and evenings. Federal regulation regarding the permissibility of deviated routes may also run afoul of this proposed legislation. Many transit agencies will not be able to provide this service at all.

We believe a better solution to early voting center access is for counties to arrange for taxi service or ridesharing trips that would make these centers more accessible for all.

For these reasons, TAM respectfully requests a unfavorable vote on HB 656.

Sincerely,

John Duklewski, Executive Director

TRANSPORTATION  
**ASSOCIATION**  
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