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HB 53

March 22, 2022

TO: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Natasha Mehu, Director, Office of Government Relations
RE: House Bill 53 – Vehicle Laws - Dedicated Bus Lanes - Prohibition and Monitoring Systems

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and Members of the Committee please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** House Bill (HB) 53.

HB 53 would provide local jurisdictions the authority to install and manage automated bus lane monitoring cameras. This legislation seeks to implement one of the recommendations that were identified in a study mandated by Chapter 340 of the Laws of Maryland of 2019.

Baltimore City contains nearly six miles of dedicated bus lanes located in and around the core of the city. These dedicated bus lanes are serviced by high-frequency bus lines operated by the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), transporting hundreds of thousands of Marylanders each day to and from work, school, running errands, and visiting family or friends.

The above-referenced joint study brought together experts in the field of transportation and law enforcement to discuss best practices in terms of dedicated bus lane enforcement. Cities across the country were studied and challenges that have come up in Baltimore were discussed. MTA Police, Baltimore City Police, and City DOT's Traffic Enforcement Officers were all unanimously in agreement that automated enforcement would be the most ideal and efficient strategy, especially considering the vast enforcement responsibilities currently under the umbrella of each of these entities, in terms of dedicated bus lane enforcement. The enactment of HB 53 is a prerequisite in making this effort a reality.

Given the will of the General Assembly in enacting Chapter 340 during the 2019 legislative session, the BCA is committed to working with all partners to craft a dedicated bus lane enforcement program that improves headways and gets Marylanders from Point A to Point B riding on MTA through our jurisdiction as safely and efficiently as possible. We remain committed to addressing any concerns the General Assembly may bring to our attention and welcome any ideas to improve bus lane enforcement in the City of Baltimore.

For these reasons, the BCA requests a **favorable** report on HB 53.