



# Transportation Association of Maryland

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**Bill:** Senate Bill 674: Transportation – Regional Transportation Authorities

**Position:** SUPPORT WITH AMENDMENT

Dear Chair Guzzone, Vice-Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee:

The Transportation Association of Maryland represents every local transit agency in our state from Garrett County to the Town of Ocean City, and recognizes and affirms the key principle of helping Marylanders everywhere have access to the life-enhancing and life-preserving mobility provided by adequate public transportation. Many Marylanders, especially elderly citizen and persons with disabilities rely upon public transit options as their primary means of accessing all the necessities of life – work, medical care, and all the thousand incidental trips without which life cannot be sustained.

We approve of the bill's ambitious effort to create three regional authorities with genuine taxing authority. Public transit in these areas (and indeed, across our state) has suffered from underinvestment for many years, an underinvestment that has compounded by the substantial cost inflation faced by our members since 2019. We approve of the bill's mandate for a portion of the funds raised to be reserved for transit, and we approve of the maintenance of effort provisions contained therein – measures that were sometimes lacking in previous iterations of similar legislation.

We propose the following amendments to perfect the worthy aims of SB 674 – areas to address items missed or lacking in detail in the original legislation:

1. Since existing locally operated transit systems (LOTS) are going to be heavily affected by this legislation, they should be explicitly named in the legislation, and their existing authority to manage transit in their communities plainly preserved.
2. Western Maryland and the Eastern Shore regions are excluded from this legislation – even if those areas are thought to be uninterested in pursuing this option, they should at least be given the opportunity to participate. Transit needs are statewide, and do not end at county lines.
3. The bill should address concerns over duplication of effort with existing regional transportation providers. WMATA, MTA, and the RTA of Central Maryland already provide multi-jurisdictional transportation in the areas covered under this legislation. We should avoid unnecessary duplication of effort and service, especially as better coordination and planning is a prime goal of this legislation.

We respectfully urge amendment and eventual passage of Senate Bill 674 to put transportation and transit funding on a truly secure footing for all Marylanders.

Sincerely,

John Duklewski  
Executive Director, Transportation Association of Maryland