



September 23, 2020

The Honorable Larry Hogan
Governor of Maryland
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Hogan:

Thank you for your leadership during the COVID-19 pandemic. I am writing to request that you restore funding to the Fiscal Year 2021 operating budget of the Maryland Department of Transportation Maryland Transit Administration (MDOT MTA) and cancel the service cuts in its proposed Winter Service Changes.

We recognize and understand that revenues to the Transportation Trust Fund are down and you are cutting the budgets of all modal administrations. However, we also understand that Maryland received \$392 million from the federal government in CARES Act funding to support the continued operation of MDOT MTA. Of those funds, \$247 million were designated for FY20 and \$145 million for FY21. MDOT has not yet released actual figures for FY20, but its September 1, 2020 announcements about cuts to the FY21 budget tell us that the MDOT MTA's operating budget of \$944 million has been cut by \$43 million. That means that when you factor in the new federal CARES support, you have cut the state's share of MDOT MTA's budget by \$188 million, a 21% reduction. No other MDOT modal administration sees its state investment cut by more than 8%.

By disproportionately reducing the state's investment in MDOT MTA you are negating Congressional intent to support the continued operation of transit. Doing so damages Maryland's ability to advocate for desperately needed additional federal aid.

It also would cause disruption to a system that Marylanders who work in essential jobs are relying on heavily during the pandemic. Pre-COVID, nearly 40 percent of people in Baltimore who commute by transit worked in essential jobs. That helps explain why bus ridership during the pandemic has not fallen nearly as much in Baltimore as on other U.S. systems.

Many households lack access to a car and far more lack a car for every worker. Your proposal to cut core bus service by 20% would be a blow to a workforce that lacks alternatives. Additionally, ridership on core bus service is overwhelmingly Black (83% according to MTA's Title VI analysis) compared to services like Commuter Bus (40% Black) and MARC (26% Black) that are being cut less severely. We should not be balancing the state transportation budget on the backs of brown and black essential workers.

On behalf of the Central Maryland Transportation Alliance and the riders and employers who depend on the MDOT MTA I urge you to cut state investment in the modal administrations by similar, fairer percentages, not 8% for the others and 21% for MDOT MTA.

It is unconscionable to accept federal aid for transit and then proceed with devastating cuts to transit anyway. Cancel the service cuts in the MDOT MTA Winter Service changes and help Maryland advocate for additional relief from Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Brian O'Malley". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end of the last name.

Brian O'Malley
President & CEO

Cc: Greg Slater, Maryland Secretary of Transportation
Maggie McIntosh, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget & Taxation Committee