



THE LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS OF MARYLAND, INC.

TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

HB 1010 – MARYLAND TRANSIT ADMINISTRATION – OVERSIGHT AND PLANNING BOARD

POSITION: SUPPORT

BY: BARBARA SCHNACKENBERG & NANCY SORENG CO-PRESIDENTS

DATE: MARCH 4, 2016

The League of Women Voters of Maryland supports a regional system of transportation that incorporates a framework based on cooperative working relationships among various governmental agencies and local concerns. To further this vision HB1010 helps to incorporate cooperation and support for a better transportation system for all Maryland residents.

There are oversight boards for the Maryland Ports Administration, the Maryland Aviation Administration and WMATA; whereas, currently none exists for MTA. This prompts the question as to why an oversight board is important.

We support an oversight board composed of local government, state government, business, labor, the disability community and most importantly, the citizens who use our transportation system. This board's actions through study groups and data analysis will help create a strategic plan with clear goals that benefit the users of our transportation system in all areas of the state.

By increasing the accountability through stakeholder representation, more support for public projects can be generated. Full financial disclosure of the benefits and costs of various alternatives and how they are distributed across the state will help to garner a greater appreciation of the benefits of one alternative over another.

The idea of a transportation department with an oversight board is not new and is not partisan. Among the states that have similar boards are: Arizona, Florida, Massachusetts, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Utah, and Vermont. South Dakota will probably create such a board in this legislative session.

We urge you to consider the advantages of having a transportation oversight board composed of a wide range of interested parties in our complex transportation system and to give HB1010 a favorable report.