

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

November 2, 2020

K. Jane Williams  
Acting Administrator  
Federal Transit Administrator  
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE  
Washington, DC 20590

Dear Ms. Williams:

We are writing to express our strong support for an application by Montgomery County, Maryland, for a Federal Transit Administration Public Transportation COVID-19 Research Demonstration Grant (FTA-2020-015-TRI). Twenty awards are expected to be made from this \$10 million grant program using FY2020 funds appropriated under the Public Transportation Innovation Program.

Consistent with COVID-19 best practice standards being developed by the public transportation industry, Montgomery County has proposed using federal grant funding to develop a platform to capture real time automated passenger counts (APC) onboard the County's Ride On bus system that could provide real time information to bus customers about available capacity, provide trip planning information to customers about alternate routes, and improve the ability of the bus control center to track bus crowding and dispatch buses to crowded routes. In addition, with federal grant support, Ride On could enhance its mobile ticketing application to enable rear-door boarding along with contactless fare payment.

Montgomery County should be commended for using a public health lens to improve public transportation safety and encourage ridership during a pandemic. The County's proposal supports the FTA's COVID-19 initiative, and we would urge that the application be granted serious consideration.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen  
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

/s/

John P. Sarbanes  
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin  
Member of Congress



David Trone  
Member of Congress