

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

February 2, 2024

The Honorable Nuria Fernandez
Administrator
Federal Transit Administration
U.S. Department of Transportation
1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, D.C. 20590

Dear Administrator Fernandez,

We are pleased to support the Maryland Transit Administration's (MTA) application for its Light Rail Vehicle Replacement Project, which seeks funding through the FTA's Competitive Grants for Rail Vehicle Replacement (RVR) Program to replace its entire existing, aged fleet of light rail vehicles serving the Baltimore region.

This project will serve light rail riders from across the Baltimore region by replacing MTA's entire fleet with modern, low-floor vehicles that will improve systemwide accessibility, safety, cost efficiency, and performance. At present, MTA's light rail vehicles date back to the system's launch year of 1992 and have either exceeded or will reach the end of their useful life within the five-year timeframe required by the RVR Program. Baltimore's light rail system currently experiences recurring service interruptions as vehicles are frequently pulled from service for maintenance and repairs, and the aged condition of the cars does not adequately serve riders. The existing high-floor cars pose mobility obstacles for passengers and require the use of raised platforms for ADA accessibility. MTA will resolve these through the procurement of new low-rail cars that will enable easy on- and off-boarding for passengers of all physical abilities.

Now is the most opportune moment for MTA to advance this project, as the availability of competitive state of good repair funding aligns with the end of useful life of existing rail cars, the scheduled investment in existing light rail stations, and the region's planning for a new east-west Red Line rapid transit line that will intersect with the existing light rail system. If funded, the replacement of the existing aged fleet of light rail vehicles will allow the region to leverage ongoing and planned investments in the transit system to generate significant economic benefit through improved transit service.

We fully support MTA's project to replace and modernize its light rail vehicle fleet, and we urge your full consideration of its proposal.

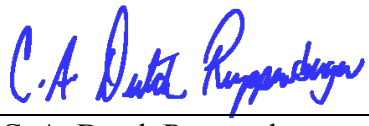
Sincerely,



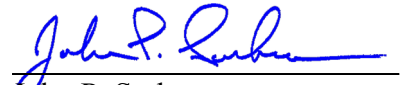
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



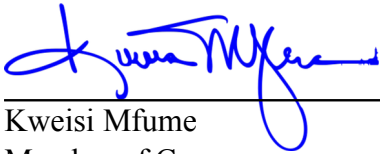
Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



C. A. Dutch Ruppertsberger
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
Member of Congress