



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3700
County Council

POSITION STATEMENT

SB 81 Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project - Funding
(Sen. Ellis)

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

SB 81 - Southern Maryland Rapid Transit Project - Funding – requires the State Department of Transportation to promptly undertake all necessary steps to complete the design, engineering, and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. This bill also requires the Governor to include an annual appropriation from the Transportation Trust Fund in the State budget.

The Southern Maryland Rapid Transit (SMRT) Project is a proposed light rail from the Branch Avenue Metrorail Station in Prince George's County to Waldorf and White Plains in Charles County. A SMRT Study Final Report by the Maryland Transit Administration in 2017, concluded that a rapid transit rail system would support the County's proposed residential and commercial development through 2040, reduce commute times, and allow County residents to take advantage of opportunities in surrounding jurisdictions. As outlined in the County's annual joint transportation priority letter, with the growth of the County, the Council will continue to pursue funding for rapid transit alternatives along multi-jurisdictional corridors.

This bill would authorize the \$27 million required for the initial phase of the project; with \$12 million allocated for fiscal year 2023 and \$15 million allocated for 2024. Despite initial construction expenses, the annual operating costs for a Rapid Transit Rail System is approximately \$10 million less than the annual operating costs of a traditional bus system. A Rapid Transit Rail System is also more accommodating to future expansion initiatives.

For these reasons, **Prince George's County Council SUPPORTS SB 81** and respectfully requests your favorable consideration of this position.

Prepared by: LA Perez Consulting
On behalf of Prince George's County Council
