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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 617

Offered January 11, 2017

Prefiled January 8, 2017

Requesting the Governor to review the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact of 1966 and engage in discussions with his counterparts in the other jurisdictions that are signatories to the Compact regarding improvements to provisions of the Compact related to the governance, financing, and operation of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

Patrons—LeMunyon, Minchew, Kory and Peace

Referred to Committee on Transportation

WHEREAS, the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA), created effective February 20, 1967, is an interstate compact agency and, by the terms of its enabling legislation, an agency and instrumentality of the signatories: the District of Columbia, State of Maryland, and Commonwealth of Virginia; and

WHEREAS, WMATA was created by the signatories to plan, develop, finance, and cause to be operated a comprehensive mass transit system for the Washington metropolitan area, including in Virginia the Counties of Arlington, Fairfax, and Loudoun and the Cities of Alexandria, Falls Church, and Fairfax; and

WHEREAS, WMATA is the largest provider of public transit service in the Washington, D.C., metropolitan area; and

WHEREAS, WMATA routinely faces challenges related to its budget, financing, governance, operations, maintenance, and safety; and

WHEREAS, the District of Columbia-based organization of business and civic leaders known as the Federal City Council, headed by former Mayor Anthony Williams, has proposed that the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact of 1966 (the Compact) be revised related to governance, financing, and labor union relations, among other recommendations; and

WHEREAS, according to the most recent information published by the Federal Transit Administration, three metrics used to calculate the cost of operating the WMATA rail system—expense per vehicle revenue mile, expense per vehicle revenue hour, and operating expense per passenger mile—are 24, 43, and 51 percent higher, respectively, than the average of the same three metrics calculated for the four closest comparable transit systems in the United States, which serve the cities of Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and San Francisco; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the Governor be requested to review the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority Compact of 1966 and engage in discussions with his counterparts in the other jurisdictions that are signatories to the Compact for the purpose of developing specific improvements to provisions of the Compact related to the governance, financing, and operation of the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority.

In evaluating the Compact, the Governor shall engage in discussions with his counterparts in the District of Columbia, the State of Maryland, and appropriate federal officials regarding (i) the legal and organizational structure of WMATA; (ii) the composition and qualifications of the WMATA Board of Directors and the length of terms of its members, including the adoption of provisions that directors need not be required to hold public office and shall be appointed by each signatory on the basis of expertise and experience gained outside of government service in the operation of large transportation enterprises; (iii) the elimination of the mandatory binding-arbitration provision associated with union contract negotiations and the adoption of a provision that no employee of WMATA or employee of any WMATA contractor be required to have membership in a labor union as a condition of employment; (iv) the transition of the employee pension plans to defined contribution plans; (v) resolution of WMATA's \$2.5 billion unfunded pension liability; (vi) implementation of the provisions of the Compact by the WMATA Board of Directors, management, and employees; (vii) modifications to the Compact that may be necessary to better ensure the safety of riders and employees, including safety in the event of a homeland security emergency in the national capital area; (viii) changes necessary to ensure the near-term and long-term financial viability of WMATA, including changes necessary to ensure that the cost structure of WMATA operates at least as efficiently as its closest comparable transit systems in the United States in terms of expense per passenger mile, vehicle revenue mile, and vehicle revenue hour; and (ix) other possible changes to the Compact that the Governor may consider appropriate after consultation with the Chairmen of the House and Senate Committees on Transportation.

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