

May 29, 2019

Honorable Larry J. Hogan, Jr.
Governor of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland
21401-1925

Re: SIGN ON LETTER IN SUPPORT OF MTA EMERGENCY RESPONSE PLAN

Dear Governor Hogan:

We, the undersigned organizations and advocates, join together to ask that you take the urgently needed action of implementing an Emergency Response Plan to address the crisis with Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) paratransit, "Mobility" services. The breakdown in service is attributable in part due to MTA changing services among its private contractors. The corrective actions that have been offered by MTA thus far are appreciated but have not stemmed the harm to riders.

People with disabilities who are unable to use fixed-route mass transit services rely on the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) Mobility service for transportation that is necessary to integrate into the community, including commuting to work and school, attending medical appointments, purchasing food and other necessities, attending religious services and participating in social gatherings. The breakdown in service has devastating consequences. Riders are missing their medical appointments due to unreliable service. Dialysis centers have reported serious disruptions in treatment and health risks for patients.

In recent incidents, riders have had to wait for two, three, and more than four hours for their scheduled rides, which failed to arrive within the established pick up window. Riders have been stranded outside for hours in electric wheelchairs with impending thunderstorms and at medical appointments waiting hours to get home to access their medications, food, and personal care aides. People are left waiting, not knowing how long it will be before Mobility arrives, if at all.

The persistence of late vehicles to pick up and drop off riders is causing major disruptions in their daily lives, as well as severe harm and unsafe conditions. Riders have reported missing work, job loss endangerment, missing religious events and day programs, and countless other hardships due to significant delays and no-shows by MTA Mobility.

Sometimes when riders try to call MTA about their late ride, they experience busy signals, are disconnected, or must wait on hold for long periods of time. Riders also report that when they get a response to their call, they may be told that a ride is coming at a specific time, but it does not arrive.

We are writing to ask for your assistance and your leadership on this issue. We request that you secure emergency measures to offset the failures in service and to protect persons who rely on Mobility as their 'lifeline'. As Governor we know you take our interests and issues seriously. We thank you in advance for your attention and action on this critical matter.

Sincerely,