



**TESTIMONY TO THE HOUSE APPROPRIATIONS,
TRANSPORTATION AND THE ENVIRONMENT SUBCOMMITTEE,
BUDGET HEARINGS**

POSITION: Comments

BY: Linda Kohn, LWVMD President

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The League of Women Voters of Maryland (LWVMD) agrees that a balanced budget is of primary concern for all of Maryland. We support, "Adequate data and a framework within which alternatives may be weighed and intelligent decisions made." We appreciate that transportation funding has a one-year reprieve and uses the Rainy Day Fund for ongoing funding in many areas. We suggest paying close attention to the final recommendations of the Commission on Transportation, Revenue and Infrastructure needs and include their proposals for revenue enhancement in next year's budget. LWVMD's positions encourage individuals to conserve natural resources and reduce energy consumption through wise use of transportation. We support incentives which promote use of mass transit and other alternative modes of travel.

One remedy for balancing the budget doesn't fit every situation. We applaud that many transit funds have been reinstated for one year. However, we are very concerned that in future budgets transit funds will be cut. These funds not only improve transit in Maryland they directly affect people's lives and our general economy and state income. Residents depend on frequent and reliable transit to get to jobs, healthcare, educational facilities, conveniences, and please consider our environment. These items power our economy. If transit suffers, everyone suffers whether they use transit or not. It is not just a budget for one year that is being considered, but our future.

Last year, a package of climate bills were passed. We have to ask how Maryland hopes to reach these goals if transit dollars are cut now or in future years. LWVUS position states that "aid for highway construction should be reduced." Please do consider that every transportation system is not equal when lives and the environment are taken into account.

LWVMD urges this subcommittee to guide us to the future and not just for one year's budget.