



# NEWS RELEASE

## HOWARD COUNTY COUNCIL

### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

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### **Councilwoman Mercer Rigby and County Executive Ball Recognize Summer School Bus Pass Pilot Program**

*Ellicott City, MD (August 30, 2019)* – This morning, Howard County Councilwoman Christiana Mercer Rigby and County Executive Calvin Ball joined the Howard County Office of Transportation and the Howard County Public School System in recognizing a pilot program that offered summer school students free bus passes to ride Regional Transportation Agency (RTA) buses in Howard County.

This goal of this program was to expand ridership among summer school students at Howard County Public Schools. An initial training took place which showed students how to utilize the transit system before passes were distributed to interested summer school participants. During the remainder of classes, students were able to use these free bus passes to ride public transit to-and-from school and throughout the County.

“This pilot program is an incredible example of collaboration between our Office of Transportation and the Howard County Public School System,” said Mercer Rigby. “Expanding transit access to our students should be a countywide priority, and this pilot program has demonstrated that importance to summer school students.”

“Our bus pass pilot is a success story that proves we can make effective change when we come together with our students’ needs in mind. By removing transportation barriers for our young people, we are simultaneously making public transit more accessible by helping them unlock their full potential,” said Ball. “I want to thank the Howard County Office of Transportation, the Regional Transportation Agency (RTA), and our school system for their partnership on this important program. By making it easier to choose public transportation, we are building a future for our kids that is environmentally conscious and affordable for all.”

During this pilot program, 100 summer school students utilized free bus passes to travel on RTA routes. This pilot program presents a unique opportunity to convey the importance of public transit options, which are usually more cost-effective and environmentally friendly than vehicular travel.

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