

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2026 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
First Reader

Senate Bill 606
Finance

(Senator McCray)

Maryland E-ZPass Commuter Fairness and Transparency Act of 2026

This bill requires the Maryland Transportation Authority (MDTA) to submit a report on E-ZPass commuter and discount plans to the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee and the House Appropriations Committee by September 1, 2026. The report must (1) analyze and provide specified data from calendar 2023, 2024, and 2025 and (2) include recommendations for lowering the amount of unused commuter trips, as specified. If, during calendar 2023, 2024, or 2025, more than 25% of all E-ZPass discount plans have unused commuter trips, the report must also include a corrective action plan to reduce or eliminate the forfeiture of unused commuter trips and mitigate consumer harm. **The bill takes effect July 1, 2026, and terminates June 30, 2027.**

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Any costs incurred by MDTA to complete the required report are minimal and absorbable within existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Bill Summary: The report must analyze data from calendar 2023, 2024, and 2025 and provide:

- the number of E-ZPass discount plans issued annually;
- the number and percentage of discount plans with unused commuter trips;

- the average number of unused commuter trips per plan;
- the aggregate dollar value of unused commuter trips by year;
- any available demographic, geographic, and usage trends; and
- any administrative, operational, and statutory factors that contribute to increased unused commuter trips.

The report must also include recommendations for lowering the amount of unused commuter trips, which may include (1) extending the allowable usage window for prepaid trips on discount plans; (2) allowing rollovers or credits for unused trips; (3) refund or partial refund mechanisms; (4) automatic transfer of unused trips to account balances; and (5) alternative discount plan structures that reduce forfeiture of prepaid funds.

Current Law: Since 1971, MDTA has been responsible for constructing, managing, operating, and improving the State’s toll facilities (for example, the Chesapeake Bay Bridge and the Governor Harry W. Nice Memorial/Senator Thomas “Mac” Middleton (Nice/Middleton) Bridge) and for financing new revenue-producing transportation projects. MDTA is a nonbudgeted State agency, meaning that its budget is not subject to the General Assembly’s appropriation process.

MDTA has the authority to set tolls on transportation facilities projects under its supervision. Tolls must provide funds that, when combined with bond proceeds and other available revenues, are sufficient to pay maintenance, repair, and operating costs for transportation facilities projects that are not otherwise paid for; pay the interest and principal of any outstanding bond issues; create reasonable reserves for these purposes; and provide funds for the cost of replacements, renewals, and improvements.

MDTA offers various [discount plans](#) to commuters that regularly use its transportation facilities projects. For example, an E-ZPass holder operating a two-axle vehicle can purchase a 50-trip plan that includes the use of the Fort McHenry Tunnel, Baltimore Harbor Tunnel, John F. Kennedy Memorial Highway, and Thomas J. Hatem Memorial Bridge, for \$70; however, any unused trips expire after 45 days.

Additional Information

Recent Prior Introductions: Similar legislation has not been introduced within the last three years.

Designated Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Department of Transportation; Maryland Transportation Authority; Department of Legislative Services

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jg/lgc

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