

Local Commuter Bus Assistance, Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority, Department of Commerce
\$8.0 Million (T00F00.23)

Purpose: Recovery Now Funding

Funding is provided for the Maryland Economic Development Assistance Authority and Fund to assist entities that have lost State or local funding because of the COVID-19 pandemic: private commuter and shuttle bus operators, including entities that provide commuter and shuttle bus services contractually to government entities, and locally operated transit systems.

March 10, 2021 - Program Highlights and Plans to Allocate Remaining Balance:

- Maryland Transportation Authority (MTA) and the Department of Commerce (Commerce) discussed the best way to distribute the funds, with MTA suggesting the funds be distributed in a pro-rata share based on percentage of service delivered.
 - The Department of Transportation contractors:
 - Academy (24.25%) - \$1,940,000
 - ACC (8.98%) - \$718,400
 - Dillon (24.57%) - \$1,965,600
 - Eyre (1.57%) - \$125,600
 - Keller (17.64%) - \$1,411,200
 - Martz GL (22.99%) - \$1,839,200
- Commerce is in the process of creating an online application and eligibility criteria.
- Commerce is currently developing outreach and marketing strategies and materials to ensure the program reaches as many businesses as possible with the goal of providing equitable distribution of these funds across a diverse group of business owners and regions. Commerce has sent out the first alert of the program on Wednesday, March 3, to over 30,000 businesses, business groups, community organizations, advocacy groups, economic development professionals, and elected officials.

March 10, 2021 - Programmatic and/or Implementation Issues:

- Commerce believes that the intent of the RELIEF Act was to distribute funds to the private sector commuter bus contractors that had their service reduced by the MTA.
- When Commerce pulled the NAICS codes for this industry, 109 companies were listed as private bus companies. However, it appears these companies are not in the commuter and shuttle services as the industry refers to them, but might be able to make the case that these companies shuttle school children as bus operators. Commerce will need to be provided further clarity on this.
- While the legislation states Local Operated Transit organizations as being eligible for this funding, many mass transit organizations did receive funding in previous rounds of federal funds through the Federal Transportation Authority.