



March 10, 2021

SUPPORT HB1204: Transportation Equity Analyses and Assurances Act of 2021: Release as “Favorable”

Chairman Barve and Members of the Committee:

The Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition (BTEC) supports HB 1204: Transportation Equity Analyses and Assurances Act of 2021 sponsored by Delegate Sheila Ruth. In addition, we seek your favorable disposition toward enactment of HB 1204.

In all major transportation system decisions since the cancellation of the Red Line light rail project in June of 2015, the current state administration has established a pattern that openly dismisses its obligations under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to perform four functions required of recipients of federal transportation funds before making policy changes. A prior transit equity analysis, a prior cost-benefit analysis, prior consultation with the members and leaders of the communities most directly affected by the proposed change in policy, and fourth, prior preparation of a viable alternative to the proposed decision(s) are the functions repeatedly avoided by MDOT. Had prior transit equity analyses been conducted as required by Title VI, the Red Line would not have been cancelled nor would the racially disparate September 1, 2020 cuts have been proposed.

HB 1204 will for the first time in Maryland’s history require the above-referenced prior analyses and studies to be conducted by MDOT in all of its modal divisions from seaport to airport to highways to core bus service before major changes in transportation policy, programs, and services can be made.

Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition (BTEC) urges the Chairman and the Committee to commend HB 1204 to the General Assembly as “Favorable” and send it on its way to an historic codification that will establish transportation equity in Maryland as a matter of state law.

Thank you. Samuel Jordan