



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 1204

Equity in Transportation Sector – Guidelines and Analyses (Transportation Equity Analyses and Assurances Act of 2021)

Environment and Transportation Committee

Appropriations Committee

3/11/2021

Good afternoon Chair Barve, Vice Chair Stein, members of the Environment and Transportation Committee, and Chair McIntosh, Vice Chair Stein, and members of the Appropriations Committee. My Name is Rev. Linda Boyd, and I am representing GREENGRACE, the environmental arm of the Maryland Episcopal Diocese. The Diocese represents 108 parishes and over 45,000 parishioners stretching from Western Maryland to Calvert County. The Maryland Episcopal Diocese supports HB 334 with amendments.

This Bill is a step toward achieving much-needed environmental racial equity in the State of Maryland. According to the Maryland Department of the Environment, “environmental justice” means that all people – regardless of their race, color, national origin or income – can enjoy equally high levels of environmental protection. Low-income and minority communities are most vulnerable to environmental justice issues. Often these communities do not have an organized community group that can serve as a point of contact.

This Bill helps communities affected by environmental justice issues deal with environmental issues, in this case the Maryland Transportation Plan. It is important that the State Report on Transportation include certain measurable transportation indicators; evaluate the transportation indicators to identify any racial disparities; and require the Maryland Department of Transportation to evaluate certain indicators to identify any impact on persons with disabilities. Communities affected by environmental justice must become aware of the environmental issues in their area, participate in the policy-making process and utilize resources available from government and private entities in order to ensure safe, healthy and sustainable communities for all.

We respectfully urge a favorable vote on HB1204.