



**HoCoClimateAction.org**

Howard County, Maryland

**Testimony in Support - HB1204** - Equity in Transportation Sector – Guidelines and Analyses  
(Transportation Equity Analyses and Assurances Act of 2021)

**Hearing Date: March 11, 2021**

**Bill Sponsor: Delegate Sheila Ruth**

**Committee: Environment and Transportation**

**Submitting: Howard County Climate Action**

**Position: Favorable**

[HoCo Climate Action](#) --a [350.org](#) local chapter and a grassroots organization representing more than 1,450 subscribers, and a member of the Howard County Climate Collaboration supports HB1204, the Transportation Equity Analyses and Assurances Act of 2021.

We have been educating ourselves and others in Howard County about the climate crisis for more than 13 years. We have supported climate change legislation at the county, state and federal level with varying degrees of success during this time, often in collaboration with larger coalitions of county and statewide partners. The national and international climate organizations we partner with are committed to environmental justice and equity. Transportation is the greatest source of climate pollution in Maryland while also contributing to air pollution, especially in urban areas, and disproportionately affecting minority and vulnerable communities.

We must have a plan for transportation that reduces climate pollution but that also gives economical transportation access to all in Maryland. The very communities in Maryland that were redlined for housing have also been denied investment in the mass transit for urgently needed access to jobs, school, doctors appointments and more. Transit-oriented-development (TOD) can transform our economy, opening up jobs and economic development that will improve lives for all Marylanders.

The Transportation Equity Act requires:

- Equity as a primary goal in the Maryland Transportation Plan;
- MDOT to collect and analyze data on racial disparities and impact on persons with disabilities in the annual Attainment Report;
- Adding a representative from the Maryland State Conference NAACP to the Attainment Advisory Committee;
- Creation of a Commission on Transportation Equity as an independent transit monitor and evaluator;
- MDOT MTA to conduct transit equity analyses, cost benefit analyses, and outreach to affected communities before public hearings on any major service change;

- MDOT MTA to perform cross-modal equity analysis and planning;
- Increased transparency with annual reporting and service change analysis reporting.

This bill will make equity a central goal in MDOT planning throughout any and all decision-making processes regarding all modes of transportation in Maryland. Equity should not be an afterthought or a box to check. Transportation affects real people whose lives are impacted by transportation. All Marylanders, regardless of race, income, zip code, or disability, need an equal right to the benefits of a well-planned transportation system.

For these reasons, we strongly support HB 1204 and urge the Committee to issue a favorable report.

HoCo Climate Action

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