



Testimony on HB1204
Transportation Equity Act
(The Transportation Equity Analyses and Assurances Act of 2021)

Position: Favorable

So many of the workers who are holding our communities together during the pandemic, ensuring that we have essential goods and services, are people of color. Many of these workers are taking the greatest risks, and many endure unnecessary hardships, including late and missing MTA buses.

The vast majority of riders on most MTA bus lines in the Baltimore region are African American, and according to MTA data, more than one of every four MTA buses fails to arrive on time. MTA has the worst record of transit vehicle breakdowns among comparable agencies across the country.

The poor performance reflects the lasting effects of structural racism. MTA, an agency that serves people of color disproportionately, is chronically under-resourced, and chronically underperforms, in Maryland, the wealthiest state in the nation.

HB1204, The Transportation Equity Act, would provide structural mechanisms to highlight and bring attention to disparities in public transit affecting people of color and other disadvantaged groups, including people with disabilities.

Bus Workgroup 14 is a grassroots group of neighborhood leaders in Baltimore City's 14th Councilmanic District. We came together in 2017 to give input on bus route changes proposed by MTA through its Baltimore Link project. For many months we held public forums with bus riders, met with our neighborhood associations, and talked with riders waiting at bus stops. And as bus riders ourselves, we have first-hand experience with MTA's poor performing transit system.

Bus Workgroup 14 strongly supports HB1204, The Transportation Equity Act. We urge your passage of this critical legislation. Thank you.

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