



Labor Network for Sustainability seeks to build a powerful labor-climate movement to secure an ecologically sustainable and economically just future where everyone can make a living on a living planet.

Committee: Environment and Transportation

Testimony on: HB 10–“Maryland Transit Administration–conversion to Zero-Emission Buses (Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act Revisions)”

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: January 20, 2022

The Labor Network for Sustainability strongly supports HB-10, which would require the Maryland Transit Administration to develop safety and workforce training programs for both operator and maintenance employees as part of its transition to zero emissions passenger buses. We especially emphasize the importance of the bill’s inclusion of joint labor-management training and apprenticeship programs as part of the workforce development process. Workers know better than anyone what it will take to effect a successful transition to a zero-emissions bus fleet and should be full participants in developing and implementing the conversion plan. Apprenticeship programs have been shown to promote work quality. Such a program for electric bus maintenance employees will ensure the proper maintenance and operation of the vehicles and could also open up career pathways for Maryland residents.

The bill’s protections for transit workers whose working conditions are adversely affected are also to be applauded. LNS strongly supports the transition away from a fossil-fueled transportation system with worker protections to ensure that the transition is also economically just. We cannot afford to lose MTA workers or worsen their working conditions as we convert our bus fleet. Maintaining the work of State employees as State work and prohibiting any lowering of wages or benefits of State employees is good for our economy, our communities, and our planet.

Workforce training and job security protections are critical to a successful transition to a zero-emissions MTA bus fleet. Including workers–through their unions–as part of the process for developing training and safety protocols will ensure the success of the training and the transition. Riders and the community will be well-served by the bill’s requirements.

We urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on this bill.

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