



MARYLAND LEAGUE
OF CONSERVATION VOTERS

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SUPPORT HB1526: Transportation Carbon Fund Act

Dear Chairman Barve, Vice-Chairman Stein and members of the Committee:

Maryland League of Conservation Voters strongly urges your support of HB1526 - Transportation Carbon Fund Act, and we thank Delegate Korman and the co-sponsor of this bill for their leadership on this important issue. This bill is a priority for Maryland LCV and an important piece in Maryland's long-term transition toward clean transportation.

Despite the broad support for the Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI), many communities in our state have not had an opportunity to provide feedback on this critical program. Some of the barriers preventing them from participating include: 1) lack of meaningful community outreach, 2) cultural differences, 3) the location of convenings, and 4) time or resources available to participate.

Furthermore, some of these communities that have the potential to benefit the most from this policy are not aware of the existence of the TCI. This lack of meaningful engagement by frontline communities, communities overburdened by pollution, and communities underserved by good infrastructure, including sustainable and climate-resilient transportation, reduces the potential impact and effectiveness of this effort.

HB1526 takes a critical step forward in identifying those communities in Maryland that have both unmet transportation needs and are overexposed to pollution. Additionally, this bill will facilitate meaningful opportunities in these communities to learn about TCI and develop strategies to facilitate a process for these communities to make recommendations for the percentage of dedicated investments that should be targeted toward disadvantaged communities and workers.

Our Latino outreach program, Chispa Maryland, works with culturally diverse communities and we understand the role cultural differences play in meaningful public engagement. This bill will address important barriers by requiring strategies for culturally competent public engagement and community input. Promoting direct engagement with community members will ensure the flow of information both ways, providing opportunities for timely updates on the development of the TCI.

As we move forward on the TCI design and process, we believe it is important for Maryland to identify affected communities, perform meaningful outreach and integrate feedback from these communities. We believe this bill offers a process that is meaningful, inclusive, and transparent.

For these reasons Maryland League of Conservation Voters strongly urges a favorable report on this priority bill.