



Committee: Appropriations
Testimony on: HB0114-- "Maryland Transit Administration-Funding (Transit Safety And Investment Act"
Organization: MLC Climate Justice Wing
Person
Submitting: Diana Younts, co-chair
Position: Favorable
Hearing Date: February 3, 2021

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB0114. MLC's Climate Justice Wing is a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and grasstops organizations focused on getting State level climate justice legislation passed. Each bill for which we advocate is evaluated through an equity lens, with a particular focus on how disadvantaged communities are affected by the bill and the bill's climate impact.

Public Transit Lifts People Out of Poverty: Public transportation is the great equalizer. It has the potential to move large numbers of people safely and economically throughout the state, connecting them with jobs, community and medical resources. Additionally, it provides economic, educational and recreational opportunities. This is even more important for low-wealth groups and populations of color, where safe and reliable public transportation is an important factor in determining upward mobility.

Transit System At Risk: However, a safe, reliable and affordable public transit system in Maryland that serves the interest of all residents is at risk. In 2019, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) released its first ever Capital Needs Inventory to assess the MTA's ongoing, unconstrained capital needs. The Inventory identified \$5.7 billion of capital needs over the next ten years, \$1.5 billion of which is an accumulated backlog of deferred maintenance. The Maryland Department of Transportation's FY 2020–2025 Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) does not provide the MTA enough funding over the next six years to address the annual maintenance and repairs identified in the CNI. In fact, the proposed program will add to the backlog. The consequences of neglecting maintenance of buses, light rail vehicles, subway trains and commuter trains is that they break down much more frequently than the MTA's peer

agencies. As a result, lower-income people who can't afford cars are disproportionately affected by these service interruptions. For low income and essential workers, public transportation is a necessity. These communities rely on public transportation to take their children to school, get themselves to work, grocery shop and fulfill other basic needs.

Reliable Transit Needed for Jobs and the Economy: The Transit Safety & Investment Act will mandate that MTA's capital budget be at a level that allows it to address all the needs identified in the Capital Needs Inventory and get the system back into a state of good repair so that it can operate safely and reliably for all Marylanders. Maryland has no future if we can't get people to their jobs. Jobs will locate in areas with good infrastructure. This is a problem that we've waited too long to solve.

For these reasons we urge you to vote favorably for HB0114.

MLC Climate Justice Wing:

Maryland Legislative Coalition
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
WISE
Frack Free Frostburg
Mountain Maryland Movement
Clean Water Action
Maryland Sierra Club
Howard County Indivisible
Howard County Sierra Club
Columbia Association Climate change and sustainability advisory committee
HoCo Climate Action
CHEER
Climate XChange - Maryland
Mid-Atlantic Field Representative/
National Parks Conservation Association
350 MoCo
Glen Echo Heights Mobilization
The Climate Mobilization Montgomery County
Montgomery County Faith Alliance for Climate Solutions
Montgomery Countryside Alliance
Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee
Audubon Naturalist Society
Cedar Lane Unitarian Universalist Church
Environmental Justice Ministry

Coalition For Smarter Growth
DoTheMostGood Montgomery County
MCPS Clean Energy Campaign
MoCo DCC
Potomac Conservancy
Casa de Maryland
Nuclear Information & Resource Service
Clean Air Prince Georges
Ji'Aire's Workgroup
Laurel Resist
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Unitarian Universalist Legislative
Ministry of Maryland
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial Cafos
Wicomico NAACP
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Chispa MD
Climate Law & Policy Project
Poor Peoples Campaign
Labor for Sustainability
The Nature Conservancy
Clean Air Prince Georges
350 Baltimore

