

Jonathan Lacock-Nisly, Director of Faithful Advocacy

January 18, 2021

**Testimony on SB199 –  
Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act  
Budget & Taxation**

**Position: Favorable**

Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA) supports SB199.

In the fall of 2019, over 50 congregations of diverse faiths all across Maryland celebrated Climate in the Pulpits. Pastors, rabbis, imams, and other clergy joined together in a call to focus on the moral duty we have to respond to climate change. Those congregations gave special attention to the harm done to our neighbors by an overreliance on automobiles. The pollution from our traffic-snarled streets and highways damages our climate and steals breath from the lungs of vulnerable populations, like children and the elderly.

When we choose instead to invest in good, reliable public transportation, we are investing in the health of our climate and our neighbors. Public transportation gives access to jobs, healthy food, and medical care. It connects our neighborhoods and builds community. Hundreds of people of faith in those congregations signed a petition asking their legislators to protect the blessings of clean air by shifting our transportation system away from fossil fuels and towards public transportation.

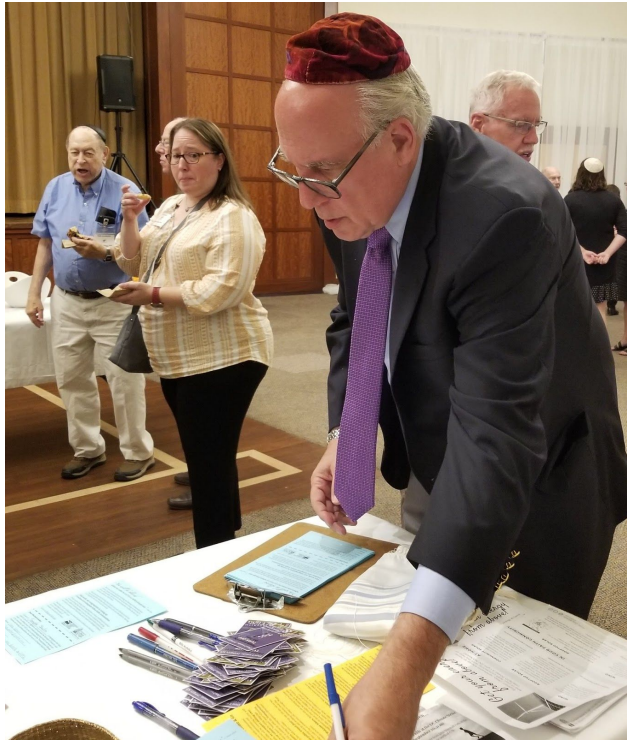
The Transit Safety & Investment Act will mandate that MTA's capital budget be at a level that allows it to address all of the needs identified and get the system back into a state of good repair so that it can operate safely and reliably.

We encourage a favorable report on SB199.

*Photos from Climate in the Pulpits 2019, when over 50 congregations across Maryland lifted up the need for good public transit and electric vehicles.*



*Members of Emmanuel Lutheran Church in Bethesda worship together, then hold an outdoor Creation care festival.*



*Members of Temple Shalom in Chevy Chase sign petitions in support of public transit funding.*



*North Baltimore Mennonite hosts IPL-DMV's Jonathan Lacock-Nisly, who speaks about transit investments as a way to care for both neighbors and Creation.*



*In Frederick, people of faith pledge to act on climate and sign petitions in support of public transit funding.*

