



## Environment Committee

**Committee:** Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs  
**Testimony on:** SB0137 - Maryland Transit Administration – Conversion to Zero-Emission Buses (Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act)  
**Organization:** Takoma Park Mobilization Environment Committee  
**Submitting:** Laurie McGilvray  
**Position:** Favorable  
**Hearing Date:** January 28, 2021

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of SB0137. The Takoma Park Mobilization (TPM) is a grassroots organization based in Takoma Park, Montgomery County and focused on state and local climate change issues. The TPM Environment Committee urges you to vote favorably on SB0137. The bill will prohibit the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) from entering into a contract to purchase buses for the State fleet that are not zero-emission buses beginning in fiscal year 2023, and will require an annual report to include a schedule for converting the State transit fleet to exclusively zero-emission buses, an evaluation of necessary charging infrastructure, a plan for transitioning adversely affected State employees, an estimate of the potential emission reductions, and analysis of projected costs.

### **Bus Transit and Greenhouse Gas Reduction Goals**

Transportation comprises one of the largest sources of greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (e.g., 42% in Montgomery County). Electrification of buses is a key strategy for Maryland to meet its GHG reduction goals and for Montgomery County to meet its even more ambitious goals of 80% GHG emission reduction by 2027 and 100% by 2035. While Montgomery County operates the local RideOn bus system, MTA operates commuter buses that run within the County. Conversion of the MTA commuter bus fleet to zero-emission buses would go a long way to helping the County and the State reduce GHG emissions.

### **Benefits Outweigh Costs of Bus Electrification**

Although purchasing electric buses is more expensive in the short-term, there are a number of longer-term benefits. First, electric buses have lower operation and maintenance costs, thus compensating for the cost differential over time. Second, electrifying public buses would improve public health through reduced air pollution and increase jobs in the growing EV infrastructure sector.

For these reasons we urge a favorable vote for SB0137.

