

BALTIMORE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABILITY
People ♦ Planet ♦ Prosperity

January 26, 2021

Senator and Committee Chair Pinsky
Members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Sent by email

RE: Support for SB 0137, Maryland Transit Administration – Conversion to Zero-Emission Buses (Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act)

Dear Chair Pinsky and Members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

We write in support of SB 0137, Maryland Transit Administration – Conversion to Zero-Emission Buses (Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act). This bill was introduced in the 2020 Regular Session as SB 0432 but did not have the opportunity to advance due to coronavirus disruption of the session.

The Baltimore Commission on Sustainability is a body appointed by the Mayor to oversee the creation and implementation of the Baltimore Sustainability Plan. The 2019 Baltimore Sustainability Plan addresses a wide range of social, economic and environmental goals for the City, and it does so through an equity lens.

The Baltimore Commission on Sustainability has a strong interest in the success of SB 0137 given our mandate to advance sustainability and equity to benefit all of the residents of Baltimore. First, reducing carbon dioxide emissions is a crucial priority for low-income communities, which are particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Second, MTA services are most concentrated in Baltimore City. As such, air pollutant emissions associated with conventionally fueled buses have a disproportionate health impact on Baltimore City residents. Residents of the City have elevated rates of asthma and chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), which is exacerbated by poor air quality. A switch to zero emissions buses will have air quality as well as carbon emission benefits that are critical to the well-being of disadvantaged communities in our City.

We urge the Committee to support SB 0137.

Sincerely,

Miriam Avins
Mia Blom
Co-chairs, Commission on Sustainability

Cc: Senator Zucker