



Committee: Environment & Transportation

Testimony on: HB710 - Equitable & Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition

Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 17, 2022

Dear Mr. Chairman and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB710. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB710.

HB710 is designed to expand the More Jobs for Maryland program by creating greater opportunity than exists today for transit-oriented development (TOD) near designated rail, bus and subway stations. By doing so, TOD reduces reliance on cars, that is a critical need of low and moderate income households, the elderly, and the disabled. At the same time it increases transit ridership, reduces congestion thus decreasing polluting and unhealthy tailpipe emissions from cars, promotes community safety, convenience, and economic development, augments land use and environmental conservation efforts, and enhances accessibility to jobs, housing, and other destinations for all residents.

Although Maryland already has a TOD program, it has far created only 17 state-designated TOD sites throughout Maryland eligible to receive state support. This is in part because it is often more expensive to develop such areas due to a combination of higher land costs, legacy developments and environmental hazards, and the need for supportive infrastructure to complement the transit station including sidewalk networks, station parking, and other barriers.

What does this bill do?

The **Equitable and Inclusive TOD Act** will:

1. Expand the More Jobs for Marylanders program, which currently provides tax credits and benefits to businesses who create new jobs in opportunity zones, to provide the same tax credits and benefits to businesses who create new jobs in TOD designated sites.
2. Create a \$10 million Transit-Oriented Development Capital Grant and Revolving Loan

Fund, to be replenished each year that the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) will administer to create competitive grant and loan programs that provide financial assistance to local jurisdictions for design, planning, construction, or gap funding for public or private development within a state-designated TOD site.

3. Require the Secretary to report to the General Assembly annually, on or before November 30, on efforts to increase TOD throughout the state, including an analysis of the demographic and socio-economic indicators for each TOD site, development activity occurring in the TOD since the last report, and transit stations utilization rates. MDOT shall review the findings from this report when making changes to the scoring standards for the TOD Capital Grant and Revolving Loan Fund.

We therefore request a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.

MLC Climate Justice Wing:

Assateague Coastal Trust
Maryland Legislative Coalition
MD Campaign for Environmental Human Rights
Chesapeake Climate Action Network
WISE
Frack Free Frostburg
Mountain Maryland Movement
Clean Water Action
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 Montgomery County
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
Laurel Resist
Greenbelt Climate Action Network
Maryland League of Conservation Voters
Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland
Concerned Citizens Against Industrial CAFOs
Wicomico NAACP
Chesapeake Physicians for Social Responsibility
Chispa MD
Climate Law & Policy Project
Maryland Poor People's Campaign

Labor Network for Sustainability
The Nature Conservancy
Clean Air Prince Georges
350 Baltimore
Maryland Environmental Health Network
Climate Stewards of Greater Annapolis
Talbot Rising
Adat Shalom Climate Action
Chesapeake Earth Holders
Climate Parents of Prince Georges
Echotopia
Maryland NAACP State Conference,
Environmental Justice Committee