



Committee: Appropriations

Testimony on: HB778 - Maryland Regional Rail Transformation Act

Organization: Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition

Submitting: Diana Younts, Co-Chair

Position: Favorable

Hearing Date: February 17, 2022

Dear M. Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB778. The Maryland Legislative Coalition (MLC) Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB778.

Vehicles are the biggest contributor to Maryland's greenhouse gas emissions and their infrastructure scars our communities with unsightly, multi-lane roadways that pollute the surrounding communities with noxious and unhealthy tailpipe exhaust, and the vehicles on those roadways kill increasingly more pedestrians in our car centric country. We are mired in this state of affairs in large part because we have neglected mass transit.

Maryland has a Cornerstone Plan that has set forth a strong vision for transformational change but it has failed to implement that plan because it has not dedicated the resources necessary to do so. This bill makes substantial steps forward in carrying out the plan by establishing investment programs to advance the MARC Cornerstone plan and regional rail service. Such steps are vital for Maryland to viably compete for \$66 billion in federal funds made available through the Federal Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

What does this bill do?

The **Maryland Regional Rail Transformation Act** will:

1. Require MTA to establish individual investment programs in the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP), starting in FY 2023 and to be updated at least every five fiscal years, for:
 - The Brunswick Line
 - The Camden Line
 - The Penn Line

- Regional rail service between Perryville and Newark, Delaware
 - Regional Run-through rail service to Alexandria, Virginia
 - Extending the Brunswick Line to better serve Western Maryland
2. Require MTA to advance specific rail priority projects in fiscal year 2023 to work with partners to:
- Develop a service and operations plan for MARC through-running to Alexandria, Virginia
 - Develop a service and operations plan for MARC, SEPTA, or Amtrak regional service between Perryville and Newark
 - Complete 30% of preliminary design for:
 - a new Elkton infill MARC Station (Penn Line)
 - a new Bayview infill MARC Station (Penn Line)
 - a third track between Rockville and Germantown (Brunswick Line)
 - Station Improvements (Brunswick)
 - Complete 15% of design for a fourth track on the Penn Line
 - Hire three full-time equivalent staff to support planning, capital programming, and leveraging federal rail funding opportunities
3. Require MTA to conduct a MARC Cornerstone Plan Implementation Study to assess the total expected cost to fully implement the MARC Cornerstone Plan in addition to the investment programs mentioned above, the associated workforce needs, and ways the rail investments and services could be funded, submitting the report to the Governor and General Assembly on or before December 1, 2022.

We urge the Committee to recommend a **FAVORABLE** report so that we can vastly improve Maryland’s mass transit infrastructure and capitalize on the funds available in the federal Infrastructure and Investment Act.

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
Mid-Atlantic Earth Holders

Climate Parents of Prince Georges
Echotopia
Maryland NAACP State Conference,
Environmental Justice Committee