



TESTIMONY FOR SB0061

Maryland Transit Administration - Conversion to Zero-Emission Buses (Zero-Emission Bus Transition Act Revisions)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Zucker

Committee: Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0061 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

This legislation builds upon the conversion of zero-emission buses to ensure that as the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA) transitions to zero-emission buses, the transition is fair for the MTA labor force. We cannot ignore our workers as we make the transition to clean, renewable energy and we must ensure that workers benefit by the transition rather than be adversely affected.

This bill requires that MTA provides safety and workforce development training for operations and maintenance workers for the zero-emission bus transition. The training includes registered apprenticeships and other labor management programs to ensure that workers are not adversely affected by the transition.

An important aspect of this bill is that the Administration is required to provide a transition plan for any State employees adversely affected by the conversion to electric buses. They must be able to qualify for other similar employment within the Administration that has commensurate seniority, pay, and benefits, and that no duties or functions are transferred to a contracting entity as a result of the conversion. Additionally, any entity that may operate or maintain the zero-emission buses must provide employee protections equivalent to the protections required by the transition plan. Lastly, the Administration is required to certify that it is adhering to the plan.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.