

## **JOSH BOKEE - HOUSE BILL 0710 - FAVORABLE**

### **Equitable and Inclusive Transit Oriented Development Act - House Bill 0710**

My name is Josh Bokee and I am a resident of the City of Frederick. I am writing to support, as favorable, House Bill 0710, the Equitable and Inclusive Transit Oriented Development Act.

In Frederick County, we are served by the MARC rail system via the Brunswick line, which connects Frederick, Montgomery and Washington, D.C. We are fortunate to have MARC train boarding stations located in downtown City of Frederick; the Monocacy station, Brunswick and Point of Rocks. Each of these MARC stations represents opportunities for future transit oriented development to varying degrees. Frederick County government recognized the potential of Transit Oriented Development (TOD) when it pursued to have the Monocacy Station designated as an official TOD zone in 2019. The City of Frederick, which owns the land that surrounds the downtown MARC station site would especially benefit from a TOD designation.

HB 0710 will focus on tangible benefits that can come from having a MARC station designated as a TOD zone. These include access by local jurisdictions to competitive grants for design, construction and gap financing of transit friendly projects within the TOD zone; as well as access to the same revolving loan funds and grants to businesses within the TOD zone as those within state Opportunity Zones. In Frederick County, the financial and planning benefits that HB 0710 would open up could help make redevelopment more attractive at the existing MARC train stations.

Frederick County has consistently been one of the fastest growing jurisdictions in the state of Maryland; HB 0710 would make more tools available to help channel that energy into smart growth projects that offer more equitable benefits for the entire community.

Thank you for your consideration of HB 0710 and the opportunity to submit favorable testimony for it.

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