



**Committee:** Appropriations  
**Testimony on:** HB0491 - Transportation – Commission to Study  
Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority  
**Organization:** Climate Justice Wing of the Maryland Legislative Coalition  
**Submitting:** Laurie McGilvray, Co-Chair  
**Position:** Favorable  
**Hearing Date:** February 21, 2023

Dear Chair and Committee Members:

Thank you for allowing our testimony today in support of HB491. The Maryland Legislative Coalition Climate Justice Wing, a statewide coalition of over 50 grassroots and professional organizations, urges you to vote favorably on HB491.

HB491 will establish a Commission to conduct a study of establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority. The Commission is required to submit a report of its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by October 31, 2024.

HB491 is a first step in addressing the fact that Baltimore, unlike the Washington Metro Area and most major metropolitan areas in the country, has no regional transportation authority (similar to WMATA). The Maryland Transit Administration makes the decisions about Baltimore’s bus and rail service, without local control or involvement. In the past, decisions made by the Governor about major transit projects, such as cancelling the Red Line, have been detrimental to the City. Transit is particularly critical for Baltimore, because nearly 30% of residents do not own a car. Improving Baltimore transit services in a way that will truly benefit underserved communities, improve access to jobs, and reduce climate impacts from cars, is critically important and requires more local control.

HB491 will take a positive step toward addressing these issues. We urge the Committee to recommend a **FAVORABLE** report for HB491.