



## **HB0491 – Transportation – Commission to Study Establishing a Baltimore Regional Transit Authority**

### **Testimony before Appropriations Committee**

**February 21, 2023**

**Position: Favorable**

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Barbara Matheson, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We are providing written testimony in **support of HB0491** establishing a commission to conduct a comprehensive study and submit a to the governor a report of findings and recommendations by October 31, 2024.

The city of Baltimore has many assets – a beautiful harbor with access to the remarkable Chesapeake Bay, internationally leading universities and medical centers, an extraordinary sports complex, and a major airport. **It lacks a robust, reliable transportation system.**

The costs have been significant. Baltimore has been at a disadvantage when competing for new businesses; commercial and industrial development has been stifled.

Citizens of Baltimore, 30% of whom do not own cars, do not have dependable service to work, medical facilities, and social activities. Job opportunities are stifled. Safety is compromised. The public transportation system disadvantages many people already challenged by poverty and structural racism. The system needs to be more equitable. Furthermore, transportation produces 28% of greenhouse gas emissions, more than any other sources. There is an unmistakable connection between greenhouse gas emissions and the quality of public transportation.

The creation of a Transit Governance and Funding Commission is the logical solution to the many serious problems of an inadequate and dated public transit system.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

Barbara Matheson, PhD  
Columbia, MD 21044

