



Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Testimony in Support

HB 9 - Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses

To: Chair Barve and the Members of the Environment and Transportation Committee
From: Phil Webster, PhD
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Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland.
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The Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland (UULM-MD) strongly supports **HB 9 Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses** and urges a FAVORABLE report by the committees.

The UULM-MD is a faith-based advocacy organization based on the Principles of Unitarian Universalism. Two Principles are particularly relevant. The Second Principle, Justice, equity and compassion in human relations and the Seventh Principle, Respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part.

Unitarian Universalists believe in justice and equity in human relations. Public transit and smart transportation planning are some of the most important tools that local and state governments have to reduce structural inequalities. This bill has provisions that will enhance equity in public transportation. It promotes an approach to equity that recommends anticipation and prevention as the better strategies when compared to recovery and correction which have been the principal strategies in the past. It requires that Transportation Equity be a MDOT goal statewide across all modes of transportation. It Creates a Commission on Transportation Equity independent from MDOT to make recommendations. And it provides protections from service changes that result in disproportionate impact on communities.

Unitarian Universalists also believe that we should all have respect for the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part. Greenhouse gasses emissions in the transportation sector is a significant portion of the Maryland emissions. Provision of an equitable transportation system would reduce greenhouse gases with a transition to green buses, light rail, rail, bicycling and walking.

Transportation decisions should improve local air quality rather than drive greenhouse gas emissions and reduce economic inequality instead of excluding working-class

communities from the opportunities we need to thrive. Historically, Maryland transportation decisions have worsened inequality instead of reducing it.

This legislation was passed by both Chambers last session and was vetoed by then Governor Hogan. We urge that this bill be expedited thru the General Assembly and be presented to Governor Moore as quickly as possible.

All Marylanders need bold and urgent action! Please keep us on the right and moral path towards a livable climate and a sustainable world. We owe it to our children.

We support this bill and urge a FAVORABLE report in committee.

Phil Webster, PhD

Lead Advocate, Climate Change UULM-MD