



HB0009 – Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses

Testimony before

House Environment and Transportation Committee

February 2, 2023

Position: Favorable

Mr. Chair, Mr. Vice Chair and members of the committee, my name is Virginia Smith, and I represent the 750+ members of Indivisible Howard County. We are providing written testimony today in **support of HB0009**, which would improve equity in our transportation planning process. Indivisible Howard County is an active member of the Maryland Legislative Coalition (with 30,000+ members). We appreciate the leadership of Delegate Ruth in sponsoring this important legislation.

There have been multiple studies and articles demonstrating that while public transit and infrastructure are often built through communities of color, they do not benefit from these systems. As stated in an article from Rice University Kinder Institute for Urban Research, there tend to be two separate transit systems in this country and in Maryland where the affluent (and often White) citizens benefit from on-time and comfortable systems, while poorer (and sadly often Black) citizens have inconsistent services with stops far and few between. They often have to transfer multiple times to reach their final destination. Meanwhile the nicer systems run through their communities, so they must suffer the health impacts. This bill will attempt to equalize this disparity by requiring a transit equity analysis, including a cost-benefit analysis that will examine impacts on not only economic development and employment, but on health, environmental justice and education. It will also require that racial minority communities, low-income communities, disable riders and other often over looked populations to ensure that all sides are considered before a project moves forward or ends.

For these reasons, we support HB0009.

Thank you for your consideration of this important legislation.

We respectfully urge a favorable report.

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