Kennedy Krieger Institute

DATE: **February 2, 2023** **COMMITTEE: House Environment and Transportation**
BILL NO: **House Bill 9**
BILL TITLE: **Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses**
POSITION: **Support**

Kennedy Krieger Institute supports House Bill 9, Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses.

Bill Summary:
House bill 9 requires that equity be considered when State transportation plans, reports, and goals are developed. Additionally, this legislation alters the membership of the advisory committee on State transportation goals and requires the Maryland Department of Transportation to conduct transit equity analyses, cost-benefit analyses, and consult with certain communities before announcing or proposing any major service change or any reduction or cancellation of a certain capital expansion project in the construction program; etc.

Background:
Kennedy Krieger's Neurodiversity at Work program takes a multi-faceted approach to hiring and retaining individuals of all abilities as part of the workforce. Neurodiversity at Work is a collective impact initiative designed to create and support gainful employment for individuals with disabilities, providing economic benefit for businesses and the larger community. The Neurodiversity at Work program fosters integrated workplace settings where all individuals can experience success and independence. Currently the program includes several specialty initiatives Project SEARCH, CORE Foundations a Developmental Disabilities Administration Licensed Agency, HR pathways hiring program, training and education services, legislative efforts, research, transition consultation services, and planning for a national conference and on-going events.

Kennedy Krieger Institute is an inclusive employer that believes that individuals with disabilities have the skills, talents, and drive to contribute significantly to the workforce and to the broader community. A neurodiverse workforce benefits all.

Rationale:
The inclusion of policies, procedures, plans, and goals that would increase access to reliable and equitable transportation for individuals with disabilities will have a profound impact on an individual's ability to access their community and workplace. Transportation continues to be a barrier for individuals with disabilities when accessing their community and workplace due to inaccessible public transportation, limited cross-county transportation, financial implications of public transportation, and reliability of scheduled para-transit services. A transit equity analysis of Maryland's transportation services would provide an opportunity to identify extant barriers and to develop innovative solutions to overcome those barriers, bringing economic benefit to Maryland and Maryland employers.

People with disabilities want the opportunity to join the workforce; accessing employment begins with accessible and reliable transportation. Transportation should not affect an employers' ability to build and maintain an inclusive workforce.

Kennedy Krieger Institute requests a favorable report on House Bill 09.

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