

TESTIMONY FOR SB0019

**Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses**

**Bill Sponsor:** Senator Carter

**Committee:** Finance

**Organization Submitting:** Lower Shore Progressive Caucus

**Person Submitting:** Jared Schablein, Chair

**Position:** FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0019 on behalf of the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus. The Caucus is a political and activist organization on the Eastern Shore, unaffiliated with any political party, committed to empowering working people by building a Progressive movement on the Lower Eastern Shore.

The Red Line was discontinued, why? Was a comparison made between the cost savings and the impact on the local communities (lost consumers, lost jobs, and wages)? Why were bus service reductions implemented in 2020 when the bulk of those impacted were low-income front-line employees? What alternatives were considered?

It's time to make serious changes when the Governor and the Department of Transportation can act unilaterally in ways that utterly circumvent Title VI protections and hurt low-income and front-line workers with no consequences at all. It is scandalous that we don't prioritize equity when making policy decisions. The fact that Maryland spends 80% of its transportation budget on highways while neglecting our public transit infrastructure is also a problem.

It is for these reasons the Lower Shore Progressive Caucus supports this bill and recommends a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.