



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB19 - Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and
Analyses
Before the Senate Finance Committee
On February 1, 2023

Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee:

There is a serious issue plaguing civil rights, economic growth, and community connection: the redlining of public transportation. Underserved communities have long been unable to access transit services, particularly because of inconsistent scheduling and unaccommodating seating.

Senate Bill 19 (SB19) seeks to fight against transportation inequity and racism, by ensuring that that public transit policies are devoid of adverse impacts based on race, color, national origin, ability status, gender, or income. This bill, a long overdue first in Maryland, would apply the equal access protections afforded under Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act to state-level transportation.

SB 19 would require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to: (1) perform a transit equity analysis prior to implementation of potentially discriminatory policies or changes in service; and (2)

compare and analyze multiple transportation services when conducting an equity analysis.

It is important that an equity analysis is performed before a policy is implemented because seemingly benign policies can adversely affect certain groups of people. For example, in September 2020, the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), which is part of MDOT, proposed a permanent cut of 20 percent in the Baltimore Region's core bus service, and a temporary cut of no more than eight (8) percent of MARC commuter train service. Approximately 83 percent of the Baltimore Region's bus ridership is Black while approximately 70 percent of MARC train ridership is white. The 20 percent cut in bus service would have imposed permanent reductions in 12 major service lines, including Bus Route #28, which transports 11 percent of all Baltimore City public school students that use public transportation. Had the cuts occurred, many Black MTA riders would have been disproportionately affected and deprived of the transportation they needed to get to work or school.

Had the MTA been required to perform an equity analysis, the potential disparate impact on thousands of residents would have informed the decision.

SB 19 would require Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to compare different transportation modes when conducting an equity analysis. When Major reductions were proposed for the core bus service, in September 2020, there were no comparable reductions

proposed for the seaport, airport, or the State Highway Administration. Surprisingly, MDOT allocates 77 percent of its total budget to the State Highway Administration but only 2 percent to the MTA. This matters because the MTA serves the bulk of public transit patrons - most of whom are people of color and low-income people with no access to automobiles. Allocation of such a minuscule portion of its budget to the MTA creates a disparate impact on persons that rely on public transportation.

SB19 merits immediate passage so that we might ensure transit policy in Maryland is thoroughly examined for potential discriminatory impacts prior to its implementation. For these reasons, I urge this committee to give a favorable report on Senate Bill 19. Thank you.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jill P. Carter". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jill P. Carter

