



MARYLAND
CATHOLIC
CONFERENCE

February 01, 2023

SB 19
Equity in Transportation Sector - Guidelines and Analyses

Senate Finance Committee

Position: Support

The Catholic Conference is the public policy representative of the three (arch)dioceses serving Maryland, which together encompass over one million Marylanders. Statewide, their parishes, schools, hospitals, and numerous charities combine to form our state's second largest social service provider network, behind only our state government.

Senate Bill 19 requires the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) beginning July 1, 2024, in collaboration with the Maryland Transit Administration (MTA), to conduct a transit equity analysis, perform a cost-benefit analysis, consult with members and leaders of affected communities, and take specified actions based on the results of these activities before announcing (1) any service change that would constitute a major service change under specified federal guidelines or (2) any reduction or cancellation of a capital expansion project in the construction program of the Consolidated Transportation Program (CTP) that exceeds transit equity thresholds developed by MTA pursuant to the bill. The bill also expands existing transportation plans, reports, and committees to include transportation equity issues.

The Conference supports legislation that recognizes the dignity of the human person in pursuit of the common good. Transit-oriented plans that help create a sustainable and economically viable region while assisting the transportation needs of the community, especially the vulnerable and marginalized, can be beneficial. Public transportation plays a key role by providing health and education solutions for families while realizing cost savings that, at times, can be significant. As stated in *Economic Justice for All: A Pastoral Letter on Catholic Social Teaching and the U.S. Economy* "Government should assume a positive role in generating employment and establishing fair labor practices, in guaranteeing the provision and maintenance of the economy's infrastructure, such as roads, bridges, harbors, public means of communication, and transport." Senate Bill 19 seeks to identify the need for more equitable public transportation in Maryland by analyzing the needs of our most vulnerable and marginalized communities.

The Conference appreciates your consideration and, for these reasons, respectfully requests a **favorable** report on Senate Bill 19.