

Samuel Jordan Testimony for SB 19 Wednesday, February 1, 2023

Senator Melony Griffin, Chair, and Members of the Budget and Taxation Committee, greetings. I am Samuel Jordan, President of the Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition. We urge you to report favorably on SB 19 the Equity in the Transportation Sector Act of 2023.

SB 19 promotes equity in transportation through anticipation and prevention as the better strategies when compared to penalty and correction, the principal strategies in the past.

Title VI-equivalent provisions are not enforced at the state level. SB 19 provides for such enforcement.

SB 19 is distinguished by the requirement that changes in transportation policy must be justified BEFORE they can be implemented. NOT AFTER implementation.

The bill's provisions would have prevented: **1)** Cancellation of the Red Line project in 2015; **2)** The fifteen-month exposure of riders to derailment on the subway in 2018; and **3)** MTA's proposal of permanent racially disparate budget cuts in the core bus service in 2020.

SB 19's anticipation and prevention strategies protect the "public" in public transportation.

Due to the bill's mandatory prior due diligence, the cost of policy change implementation will be reduced. SB 19 is also cost effective.

SB 19 has major implications for climate change response and environmental protection. If, for example, MDOT MTA put zero emissions buses in service on routes only serving mostly white passengers, SB 19 would reject such disparate distribution of the benefits of zero emissions vehicles.

Finally, we would alert the Committee to the equity goals of this legislature and our new Governor. With enactment of SB 19, Maryland will become the leader among the states of the nation in the enforcement of Title VI-equivalent equity protections in public transportation.

Senator Griffin and Committee, we again urge you to report favorably on SB 19. Thank you.