



January 25, 2021

Testimony on SB199
Maryland Transit Safety & Investment Act
Budget & Taxation

Position: Favorable

I am writing as a member of Sunrise Movement, a youth movement fighting to create millions of jobs to address the climate crisis, I am urging you to support the Transit Safety and Investment Act, SB0199.

In our local Baltimore hub, we endorse this measure because we understand that climate justice cannot be achieved without funding, maintaining, and modernizing a transit system that serves all the people of our city, particularly people of color. Climate justice means our governments and communities must address the climate crisis through environmentally friendly emissions reductions while prioritizing communities who have traditionally been left behind in our country - people of color, low wage earners, and in MD - folks in Baltimore who don't have access to reliable transit.

In Maryland we are far from achieving climate justice in the transportation sector. Neither from an environmental perspective nor with an eye towards equity does our transit system measure up. It doesn't even measure up to other metropolitan cities' systems - much less the type of system that science and justice require. MD certainly is not leading the charge to a Green New Deal in the transit sector.

The transportation sector is the largest contributor to greenhouse gas emissions in the state. This can only be solved by investments into efficient public transit. We should be expanding a net-zero system of trains and electric buses that connect every community. Instead we are fighting for the administration to pay for basic safety maintenance of the assets we already have.

Furthermore, this is a racial justice issue in Baltimore especially. In our majority black city, many residents rely on buses that break down frequently - or commuter trains that fail for weeks at a time. In a city where jobs are moving to the suburbs and people often travel over 45 minutes to reach their job - sustainable employment for Baltimore residents requires a functioning transit system.



As a young person concerned with climate and efficiency, I want to reduce emissions and congestion. I want to ride public transit - but I also want to make it to my destination on time. In one of the wealthiest states in the country, this should not be a tradeoff, but in Baltimore, it is. The state of MD must end the neglect and join other cities on the east coast in providing a basic necessity of urban life - reliable public transit.

I encourage a FAVORABLE report for this important legislation.