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## HB 12 – Equitable and Inclusive Transit-Oriented Development Enhancement Act

### **Position: Favorable**

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written comments in support of House Bill 12. This bill would establish a capital grant and revolving loan fund to promote equitable and inclusive development around State-designated Transit-Oriented Development (TOD) sites which will help bring more TODs benefits to communities around Maryland.

The State of Maryland has a long history of recognizing TOD as a preferred approach to development because of its many significant benefits, including increased transit ridership, reduced congestion, increased safety and convenience, adjacent economic development opportunities, environmental conservation, and better access to jobs, housing, and services. However, public incentives, and often direct support, are typically needed for such projects due to the complexities of TOD, including higher land costs, environmental conditions, and especially the need for critical supporting infrastructure, such as sidewalks and parking. To date, the state government has not adequately facilitated equitable and smart development around its transit stations, reducing the state's economic competitiveness.

As the largest not-for-profit health plan in the Mid-Atlantic region, millions of Maryland families depend on our services. CareFirst understands that adequate investments in Maryland's transportation system are critical to the economic competitiveness and vibrancy of our state and region. CareFirst appreciates that more development around our transit stations will enhance the lives of not only of our employees, but of the patients, healthcare workers, and institutions that rely on the transit system to access work, healthcare, or attract talented staff. This bill will also enhance Maryland's ability to invest in its transportation system over the long term by expanding development opportunities, and tax revenues, around transit.

CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield is a member of both the Greater Baltimore Committee and the Greater Washington Partnership, both of which are leading a campaign to advance [Baltimore's Transit Future](#). Equitable development at transit and rail stations is one of the six priority pillars that is addressed and supported by **House Bill 12**. CareFirst is a supporter and signatory of Baltimore's Transit Future campaign's efforts to advance a world-class public transit system for the Baltimore region that creates shared economic prosperity and catalyzes inclusive growth.

**We respectfully urge a favorable report.**

### About CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield

*As the largest healthcare insurer in the Mid-Atlantic region, CareFirst provides health insurance products and administrative services to 3.6 million individuals and employers in Maryland, the District of Columbia and Northern Virginia. We participate in the individual, small group and large employer markets, as well as in Medicare and Medicaid. CareFirst is Maryland's only nonprofit health service plan and consistent with our not-for-profit mission, we are committed to improving the overall health of the communities we serve, and increasing the accessibility, affordability, safety, and quality of healthcare throughout our service area.*

*To learn more about CareFirst BlueCross BlueShield, visit our website at [www.carefirst.com](http://www.carefirst.com) and our transforming healthcare page at [www.carefirst.com/transformation](http://www.carefirst.com/transformation), or follow us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), [LinkedIn](#) or [Instagram](#).*