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MAJORITY WHIP

Appropriations Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Oral testimony of Delegate Jazz Lewis
HB341 – Transportation – Statewide Transportation Improvement Programs and
Transportation Improvement Programs – Equity Impacts
Before the Appropriations Committee

Chairman Barnes, Vice-Chair Chang and members of the Appropriations Committee

Thank you for this opportunity to present House Bill 341 which requires the Department of Transportation to include equity analysis in the statewide transportation improvement program; and requires our state's metropolitan planning organizations to include the impacts on low-income and minority communities in transportation improvement programs.

The statewide transportation improvement programs referred to as STIP's and the transportation improvement programs, or TIP's, are used by the state to list in detail transportation projects requesting funding from the state, federal and local levels. These programs list everything from highways to bike lanes. Yet, despite the importance of these programs, and despite the impact these listed projects might have, we do not require their impact on low-income or minority communities be analyzed within the STIP's and TIP's. That is what this bill sets out to do. To have these impacts studied on the front-end so that we can better understand how our more vulnerable communities will be affected by the actions that we take before we take them.

This analysis is sought by President Biden and the federal Department of Transportation who have outlined the need for more states to include equity analysis in transportation improvement programs. And this bill is to ensure that we follow President Biden's Equity Action Plan for transportation by mandating our programs take into account the impacts our policies and plans will have on the low-income and minority communities within Maryland. Equity is a priority for the Biden Administration when it comes to these programs, and HB341 makes sure that we share that priority in statute.

Often, these are the communities that bear the consequences for our transportation policies. I am from the city of Glenarden in Prince George's County, a place cut in half by the Eisenhower highway network. And this was done with no input from that community or with really any care for how the community might have been

impacted. With this bill, we will ensure that we have this analysis and fully understand the impacts that our transportation policies may have on our state's most vulnerable and historically left-behind communities when we submit these programs as desired by the Biden Administration.

For these reasons, I urge a favorable vote on HB341