

To:

August 27, 2018

Maryland Department of the Environment
Maryland Department of Transportation
Maryland Climate Change Commission

We, the undersigned urge Maryland to take actionable measures to improve our climate, health, and economy by aggressively reducing climate-disrupting pollution from our transportation sources. Transportation is the largest source of carbon pollution in Maryland, responsible for nearly half of statewide emissions.”¹

In 2016, the Maryland General Assembly mandated that the state create an actionable plan to reduce economy-wide emissions 40% by 2030. Maryland’s current plans do not put us on a trajectory to reduce emissions from the transportation sector consistent with these goals. According to data shared by the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) in April 2018, the state will have a nearly 5 million metric ton gap for on-road emissions even if key federal and state programs planned and in place are fully implemented successfully.² Unfortunately we cannot safely assume that those federal and state programs and policies will remain in place or meet their full potential -- the Trump administration is attempting to roll back the federal fuel economy standards that Maryland is relying on to meet its 40% by 2030 goals and our current rate of zero-emission vehicle (ZEV) deployment does not put us on a trajectory to meet our 2025 target of nearly 300,000 ZEVs in the state. We need bold leadership to implement and protect existing programs and innovative policy development to close the pollution gap.

In order to meet our pollution reduction goals and flourish in today’s economy, Maryland must transform its transportation sector into a 21st century, regionally integrated system. Maryland’s car-centric, piecemeal planning model has contributed to Maryland’s rank at the top of states with the worst congestion problems, overburdened our communities with toxic pollution that exacerbates asthma and other health problems - especially in our most vulnerable populations - and left many residents with insufficient transit options.

We need safe, reliable, affordable, and equitable modes of transportation in our urban, rural, and suburban areas that connect the places we work, live, and spend our time regardless of our race, income and ability status. We ask you to commit to rebuilding our transportation system and creating thriving economic centers by investing in regional, clean and multi-modal transportation options that are connected with smart, responsible land use development.

¹ U.S. Energy Information Administration, “Table 3. 2015 State energy-related carbon dioxide emissions by sector,” *Energy-Related Carbon Dioxide Emissions by State, 2000-2015* (January 22, 2018), www.eia.gov/environment/emissions/state/analysis/pdf/table3.pdf.

² Maryland Department of Transportation. *MDOT - 2018 GGRA Draft Plan Status*. Slide 14. Available here: <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/ClimateChange/MCCC/MWG/MWGMDOTPresentation04052018.pdf>

We strongly believe that the Regional Greenhouse Gas Initiative (RGGI) serves as a model of a market-based policy that can help usher this transformation. Over the past decade, this bipartisan model has proven to substantially reduce the pollution that endangers our well-being while generating dedicated funding sources to invest in our communities and create clean jobs. The RGGI process has also shown us the importance of improving the implementation of this policy framework to ensure a transparent and equitable distribution of benefits from reducing pollution and providing funding for clean projects. Lessons learned from RGGI should be used as guidance when considering and developing new pollution-reduction policies for the transportation sector in Maryland.

That is why we call on Maryland to make a firm commitment to participate in a regional program, using the lessons learned from our RGGI experience, that aggressively limits transportation pollution and invests in clean alternatives. In order to meet our state and regional climate action goals, we must establish an action plan with our neighboring states that achieves pollution reductions beyond our current trajectory to achieve at minimum, a 40 percent reduction in transportation sector climate pollution by 2030.³

Investment decisions should be made based on pollution reduction and equity goals, as well as input from the public, and could include:

- Public transportation improvements and expansion—including existing WMATA and MTA funding and sustainable land use planning (e.g. Corridor Cities Transitway, Baltimore east-to-west Red Line rail project, Southern Maryland Rapid Transit project, MARC expansion initiatives).
- Electric vehicle tax credits and rebates
- Low-and moderate-income programs (keeping transit prices/passes low)
- Bike and pedestrian infrastructure expansion/complete streets programs
- Educational courses and data-driven training programs for public transportation managers and technicians
- Electric transit buses and school buses
- Public electric vehicle charging stations, or incentives for workplace charging
- Affordable housing near transit
- Public education on low-carbon transportation options

We also call on Maryland to follow other states like Massachusetts and New York in holding multiple, inclusive public engagement sessions that allow Marylanders to provide input into this process in addition to the session held on August 27th in Largo, Maryland. These listening sessions and workshops should be held in communities historically overburdened by pollution

³ Georgetown Climate Center and Cambridge Systematics. *Reducing Greenhouse Gas Emissions from Transportation: Opportunities in the Northeast and Mid-Atlantic*. November 2015. Available at: <http://www.georgetownclimate.org/reports/reducing-greenhouse-gas-emissions-from-transportation-opportunities-in-the-northeast-and-mid-atlantic.html>

from transportation fuels or underserved by current transportation opportunities, including environmental justice and rural areas. Wherever possible, the workshops should be more accessible via public transit and held during evening hours or weekends.

We are glad to see Maryland standing with other bipartisan states in leading the nation on climate action and look forward to Maryland's transition to a clean transportation future.

Sincerely,

1199 SEIU United Healthcare Workers East

Acadia Center

ATU Local 1300

Baltimore Transit Equity Coalition

Bikemore

Central Maryland Transportation Alliance

Earthjustice

Environment America

Environment Maryland

Environmental Entrepreneurs (E2)

Howard County Climate Action

Interfaith Power & Light (DC.MD.NoVA).

League of Women Voters of Maryland

Maryland Environmental Health Network

Maryland League of Conservation Voters Chispa Maryland

Maryland PIRG

Maryland Transit Opportunities Coalition

Natural Resources Defense Council

Preservation Maryland

Sierra Club

Southern Maryland Alliance for Rapid Transit

The Climate Mobilization of Montgomery County

Unitarian Universalist Legislative Ministry of Maryland

Union of Concerned Scientists