



VISION - *BRIDGE Maryland sees the state challenged by a history of inequity but engaged in community organizing for a more just tomorrow.*

MISSION - *BRIDGE Maryland uses intentional relationship building, organizing and intensive leadership development in order to strengthen congregations and faith leaders to demonstrate and advance justice in the world.*

Transportation Task Force Position Paper 2019

The Problem

In the Baltimore Metropolitan area there is a lack of coordinated mass transportation. Buses do not cover all areas of the Metropolitan area; portions of the area are not covered at all. Getting from the East side of Baltimore to the West side takes 2 -3 buses and a rider must hope that the buses are on time in order to make connections. To go into other counties depends on catching the right bus at the right time -- if there is service to where you need to go.

Why this issue matters?

As people of faith, concerned that all people are created equal in the eyesight of God, the most impoverished areas are the ones having the greatest dependence on mass transportation and the jobs that are coming into the region are in areas that traditionally did not need and do not have mass transportation. This keeps the impoverished areas impoverished; money cannot come into the community so that the community can become self-sustaining.

What needs to happen ?

A regional transit authority (RTA) must be developed so that equitable transportation can be developed. Support of **HB 771/SB 630** (co-sponsored by Delegate Bridges and Senator Carter) is a beginning. The bill will begin a

feasibility study of an RTA and the impact it will have on the Baltimore Metro Region. Funding must be set aside for the study. We must seek support for the passage of this bill. This legislation needs to be passed in this session of the General Assembly.

What's at Stake?

The economic development of the region is at stake. Companies will not come into the region if the track record for employees is such that they cannot get to work and, if they do, the worker mostly will not get to work on time. The reputation of Baltimore and the surrounding counties is at stake. It is possible we lost Amazon having its headquarters here and expanding its operations because of a lack of good transportation.

Follow up

We will continue to come to Annapolis and solicit the support of the members of the Senate on the Budget and Taxation Committee and the Finance Committee. In the House we will solicit the support of Appropriations Committee, Ways and Means and Environment and Transportation. Every two weeks we will come to talk with these members of both the House and Senate and send letters, emails and phone calls.