

Friday, August 9<sup>th</sup>, 2019

Secretary Ben Grumbles  
Maryland Department of the Environment  
Email: [ben.grumbles@maryland.gov](mailto:ben.grumbles@maryland.gov)

Deputy Secretary R. Earl Lewis, Jr.  
Maryland Department of Transportation  
Email: [rlewis1@mdot.state.md.us](mailto:rlewis1@mdot.state.md.us)

Dear Secretary Grumbles and Deputy Secretary Lewis,

We, the undersigned thank you both for your public commitment, during the July 30<sup>th</sup> Transportation and Climate Initiative (TCI) Workshop in Baltimore, to host Maryland specific TCI's public engagement sessions. This is an essential step forward in providing community members across Maryland an opportunity to learn about, and meaningfully participate in the design and implementation of the TCI.

Robust public participation is essential for increasing transparency and accountability throughout the TCI process. Despite the importance of public engagement on the design and implementation of TCI from the start, communities in Maryland have not had an opportunity to participate in the previous TCI's public engagement sessions. Some of the barriers preventing them from participating include a lack of community outreach from the organizers, the location of the convenings, and the time or resources available to participate. Even more, some of these communities that have the potential to benefit the most from this policy are not aware of the existence of the TCI. Your commitment to host multiple public engagement sessions will allow Marylanders to provide essential input into this process.

For these public engagement sessions to be inclusive and overcome some of the aforementioned participation barriers, we recommend that Maryland Department of the Environment (MDE) and Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) first identify different constituencies and communities historically overburdened by pollution from transportation fuels, as well as those underserved by transportation opportunities, including environmental justice and rural areas. Once identified, we strongly encourage MDE and MDOT to:

1. Provide opportunities for these communities to learn about TCI, its policy design process, benefits, timeline and progress.
2. Create mechanisms for these communities to regularly provide feed-back on key elements of TCI.

We also encourage MDE and MDOT to conduct six or more public sessions. Affected communities in Maryland are diverse in many aspects, from rural to urban dwelling, cultural differences, racial backgrounds and income levels. As Maryland designs this public participation process, there are several additional recommendations we can offer. It is essential to work with community connectors from affected communities that have the capacity and willingness to assist during this community engagement process. Like [Massachusetts](#), the vast majority of these sessions should be held during the evening or on the weekend, should be accessible to people with disabilities and those with limited English proficiency, offer language services, and be accessible by public transportation. The sessions should also have an open public comment period for people to offer input.

Meeting directly with community members can ensure the flow of information both ways, providing opportunities for timely updates on the development of the TCI, and for community members to provide meaningful input to design the policies and refine the process. This sharing of information and feed-back will enhance trust and reduce potential conflicts further down the design and implementation process. Finally, a State specific plan provided by Maryland would help us to stay on track with the policy development timeline, including opportunities to provide feed-back in person and remotely.

Once again, we believe it is important for Maryland to perform outreach and integrate feedback from communities and are very glad to see this commitment to public participation. We look forward to working with you to make this community engagement process robust, inclusive and transparent.

Sincerely,

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Chispa Maryland**

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Jimmy Rouse,  
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