



January 17, 2022

**Bill: Procurement - Zero-Emission Vehicles (21-0159)**

**Position: Favorable**

Dear Committee Chair Costello and Members of the Committee,

Blue Water Baltimore's mission is to restore the quality of Baltimore's rivers, streams, and Harbor to foster a healthy environment, a strong economy, and thriving communities. We respectfully request your support of Procurement - Zero-Emission Vehicles (21-0159).

The climate crisis poses significant risks to Baltimore's communities, waterways, and environment. For example, precipitation in Maryland has already increased by 2.63 inches per decade since 2000.<sup>1</sup> Baltimore City is not equipped to handle this increased rainfall, as seen in incidents such as the devastating 2018 Frederick Ave corridor flood that damaged over 200 homes in the Beechfield neighborhood and the unacceptable rate of sewage backups into residents' homes across the city.<sup>2</sup>

While it is true that climate change is a global issue that requires a strong, coordinated international response, local jurisdictions have a critical role to play in reducing emissions and modeling a more sustainable path forward. Procurement practices are a particularly important leverage point for municipalities striving to take action on climate change. By converting the City's fleet to zero-emission vehicles, this bill will help reduce the climate-warming emissions from government operations. Specifically, this bill will require half of the City's fleet of vehicles to be zero-emission by 2030 and the rest of the fleet to be zero-emission by 2040. In doing so, it will bring the City in line with Maryland's plan to have a fully electric state fleet by 2040.<sup>3</sup>

Converting its fleet is a common sense step for the City to take in reducing its own emissions and is one important component of Baltimore City's response to the climate crisis. During implementation, the Department of General Services, City Administrator, and other agencies should collaborate closely with the Mayor's Office of Minority and Women-Owned Business Development to prioritize minority and women-owned companies throughout this fleet conversion process. We also urge the City Council to continue to advocate for clean and accessible public transportation options across Baltimore, particularly the Red Line, to provide equitable transportation options for all Baltimoreans while reducing the use of private vehicles.

We urge a favorable report on 21-0159.

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> Devon Milley & Clara Niel. (2021). [Maryland is seeing an increase in precipitation, sea level and flooding](#). Capital Gazette.

<sup>2</sup> Ron Cassie. (2019). [Hell and High Water](#). Baltimore Magazine.

<sup>3</sup> David Worford. (2021). [Maryland Department of Transportation Makes Plans for Total Electric Bus Fleet](#). Environmental Leader.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Taylor Smith-Hams". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Taylor Smith-Hams  
Advocacy & Outreach Senior Manager