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## THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES

### ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

#### **Testimony in support of HB731 - Purple Line Light Rail Project - Excess Property – Donation**

HB731 requires the Department of Transportation, the Maryland Transit Administration, and Purple Line Transit Partners (PLTP) to donate any unused property from the Purple Line to the county government where that property is located.

The Purple Line, when completed, will operate along a 16.2 mile stretch between Montgomery and Prince George's County. Construction has been ongoing since August 2017, and will continue through the project's completion in 2022. Purple Line Transit Partners have been using thousands of acres of land for construction, operation, and storage. When the project is completed, I want to ensure that any land not being used by PLTP for the project itself is donated to county government.

I have heard many concerns about housing costs from residents of my district and the Purple Line corridor. Renters and homeowners along the corridor are already cost burdened at rates greater than the regional average (households that spend over 30% of their income on housing are considered cost burdened).

Currently, 25% of homeowners in the Purple Line corridor are cost burdened, compared to 15% of owners from other parts of the region. Since 2014, monthly median rents across the corridor have risen by an average of 29% and median rent along some areas of the corridor have increased by over \$200 per month.

As you can see, affordable housing is a pressing matter for the residents along the Purple Line corridor. Only at the county level can the best decisions about future use of this land be made. Much of the Purple Line route cuts directly through high poverty areas, and HB731 represents the best way to protect the interests of the people who live there.

I respectfully request a favorable recommendation on House Bill 731.