



York Road Partnership is membership network of 30+ neighborhoods and affiliates promoting the vitality of Baltimore City's York Road community as a desirable urban environment in which to live, shop, work and worship.

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Testimony of Christopher Forrest, President York Road Partnership

Supporting SB 869 – Small Box Discount Stores – Zoning Requirements and Community Agreements

Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee Hearing

March 3, 2022

The York Road Partnership is a collaboration among 30 Baltimore City neighborhoods and institutions all along York Road from 43rd Street to the Baltimore County line. We have been working together for more than 25 years to improve the quality of life on the York Road commercial corridor and in the communities along it. Working together, we have raised hundreds of thousands of State, City, and philanthropic dollars to improve commercial façades, rehabilitate vacant homes, and help senior citizen homeowners with badly needed home repairs.

One force working against us is the proliferation of dollar stores along our corridor. We have a dense population and one of the highest-ridership MTA transit lines in the Baltimore metropolitan area. We should have a grocery store with healthy food that is easily accessible to our corridor's residents. Yet the first dollar store to move into our corridor, Family Dollar, moved into the space that had housed a Food Lion. Two more then moved in just over the past few years, all less than a mile apart.

SB 869 would prevent dollar stores from locating so closely together, it would direct the Baltimore City Board of Municipal Zoning Appeals (BMZA) consider impact on grocery stores and other needed retail when approving a newly conditional use. And finally, it would require memoranda of understanding with nearby neighborhoods for those dollar stores that do locate.

SB 869 would help our corridor in our revitalization work, and we urge a favorable report.
consideration.

Sincerely,

Christopher Forrest
President