

Testimony

The 52,000 square foot industrial cannabis warehouse erected at the entrance to my neighborhood, has significantly changed the rural nature of our small town, the one that I had grown up in since birth, the one I had come to love.

I've lived off of the same road for 38 years. I currently live in the home my father was raised in, the one my grandparents built in 1959. This was the reason that I did not move away when I got married, my husband and I felt this quiet road was the perfect place to raise a family. We had dreams of continuing to raise our young children here, but gone are the days of serene quiet, and fresh air. These are treasured qualities I used to enjoy at my property that I will never get back.

There is not a day that goes by that we do not hear the buzzing of air compressor units or smell the stench of marijuana in the air.

There is now an industrial, commercial operation, improperly placed in the critical area.

The warehouse is located on the same tributary where I enjoyed fishing and crabbing with my son. It is less than a half a mile from the farm my husband hunts deer on. It is located in an area where the road is not substantial enough to handle the influx of traffic to the facility. It is located where public water and sewer are not available. How did this happen? Because it was approved as agriculture, and it has now grown to an industrial operation which was initiated in the permitting process under the guise of a proposed greenhouse.

I am not providing this testimony because I am opposed to what marijuana is. I worked as a hospice nurse for 10 years and saw patients benefiting from symptom management with its use. I am giving my testimony because the improperly placed industrial warehouse affects the ability of Abell residents to enjoy their property without being burdened. We never had an opportunity to participate in a public hearing prior to the monstrosity being erected, there were no studies done, no informational sessions, it was not required when it pushed through as "agriculture." And now, any effort on behalf of citizens leaves us with dead end phone calls going back and forth with finger pointing between the County and the State because of the confusion as to who has the authority on these decisions. This needs to be clarified and properly defined.

If we decide we can no longer stay in our homes because of the effects, what financial loss will we suffer because of the decrease in property value? If we stay, how much longer do we endure the burdens placed on us? Who takes the responsibility to uphold our rights as property owners?

The decisions made on these Bills affect the lives of citizens all across the State of Maryland, please don't let yourself be so consumed by the industry that you forget that.

It is critical that the Counties of Maryland be permitted to establish reasonable zoning requirements for these types of facilities. It is only at the County level that the character and nature of that said area can genuinely be represented and protected.