

## Town of Friendsville Maryland

2/21/24

Dear Environmental and Transportation Committee

Good afternoon Mr Chairman and members of the committee thank you for this opportunity. On behalf of the Town Council and myself the Town of Friendsville is against the passage of HB 910. Friendsville would appreciate an unfavorable committee vote on this bill for the following reasons:

The Town of Friendsville believes that if HB 910 is passed it will negatively impact the hydro electric Dam's (Brookfeild) permit requirements resulting in potentially jeopardizing whitewater dam releases. This risk would considerably increase in the instance of a drought spring occurrence or if a Dam service repair issue arises, both of which have occurred in the last few decades. Friendsville has strong social and economic bonds to their annual sixty six scheduled whitewater dam release days and thus would be against this bill passage.

The Deep Creek Lake Watershed Foundation (Foundation) is considered an equal shareholder among Deep Creek Lake Stakeholders under MDE's Permit considerations. When a permit impact is desired the request must go through MDE where they determine if it has merit and if so they request comment from all DCL stakeholders. The Foundation requested an MDE review for their permit impacting study without credible scientific evidence. According to conversation on 2/16/2024 with stand in director of MDE Water Suply Robert Peoples, MDE looked at their request and couldn't find sufficient scientific evidence to support their plan to perform such a Permit impacting study, thus the request was denied. Instead of resubmitting its request to MDE with more creditable evidence included, it appears that the Foundation circumvented MDE and solicited local politicians to intervene. This resulted in the creation of SB 837 without full DCL stakeholder participation or consideration, including the Town of Friendsville.

Friendsville found out about this bill just days ago 2/13/2024 when a warning went out to Friendsville economic River Liaison Jess Whittemore from Brookfeild via e-mail and subsequent phone conversations. Mr Whittemore called Robert Peoples at MDE to verify that what Brookfeild was saying was accurate. Robert Peoples said that Brookfield's statement in the e-mail was accurate; "If the Senate Bill is passed, this will impact the requirements of our permit, including but not limited to jeopardizing whitewater releases."

The Town of Friendsville is disappointed that we were not included on discussions leading up to this potentially damaging HB 910, it circumvents the proper, lawful and thorough MDE process of Dam Permit impact review and stakeholder involvement. The Town of Friendsville is against HB 910 passage and look forward to helping out in the respectful confines of MDE's, DCL stakeholder negotiation as we expect.

Sincerely,  
Spencer R Schlosnagle  
Mayor

Cc:

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