

SarahLesher\_FAV\_HB299

Chairman Barve, Vice Chair Stein, Members of the Committee:

I urge you to support HB299 summarized as “Prohibiting a State agency or its designee from acquiring residential real property for a public-private partnership project that includes the addition of toll lanes to I-495 or I-270.”

The fiscal note for this bill reiterates Chapter 5 of 2013: “The presolicitation report must, among other requirements, (1) state the specific policy, operational, and financial reasons for the P3; (2) identify the anticipated value and **environmental implications** of the P3; and (3) **evaluate the risks and benefits** of the P3.”

It is clear from testimony of the P3 SHA/DOT group before the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission and statements by former DOT Secretary Pete Rahn to the Montgomery County Council and SHA answers/non-answers to my questions in I-495/I-270 expansion public workshop that the “environmental implications” including the environmental risks and benefits have **not** be adequately studied or addressed.

Chief among these are the impact on public health from additional air, water, and noise pollution, external costs born by residents and taxpayers and **not** paid for by the private partner(s).

And the impact on climate change from destruction of vegetation and permeable soil on shoulders of existing highways and in yards, and surely ultimately parkland and Rock Creek and Anacostia ecosystems, damaging the already stressed Chesapeake Bay which we taxpayers have already spent much time and energy and money trying to preserve. Increased flash flooding from replacing permeable with impermeable surfaces. Imposing more external costs on taxpayers for repair of damage.

Legislators must start identifying and demanding the quantification of these “externalities.” And forcing those who would benefit from P3s or other projects to pay for them.

Taking residential real property that is in most cases at least partially vegetated with permeable soil in anticipating of paving it over in a construction process that by itself produces many greenhouses gases and other pollution is not compensated for by paying the real property homeowner a “fair value” for her or his land. The costs to the rest of us, and to future generations, must also be addressed.

New economics textbooks acknowledge this.

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