

LORIG CHARKOUDIAN
Legislative District 20
Montgomery County

Economic Matters Committee

Subcommittees

Public Utilities

Workers' Compensation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
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HB 175 – PUBLIC SAFETY – STATE FIRE MARSHAL – EXPLOSIVES LICENSE

TESTIMONY OF DELEGATE LORIG CHARKOUDIAN

JANUARY 28, 2020

Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Atterbeary and Members of the Judiciary Committee:

Last January my office was contacted multiple times by constituents regarding nighttime disturbances during the Purple Line Manchester Tunnel construction. Blasting operations in a residential neighborhood were occurring as early as 5am in the morning, and continuing as late as 9pm at night. These hours of operation were negatively impacting the health of my constituents and their quality of sleep.

The District 20 Delegation requested these hours be restricted from 6am to 8pm, however during this pursuit, we learned that blasting was occurring outside of the Montgomery County Fire Code which allows blasting between the hours of 7am to 7pm. Under the State Fire Prevention Code and within the NFPA codes, there are no times listed for blasting within the State of Maryland.

HB 175 addresses a number of issues. This bill will require any operation using explosives to adhere to the time restrictions established by the political subdivision in which the explosives will be used, including the use of explosives for State projects. This gives Authorities having jurisdiction the opportunity to codify a local time restriction for blasting operations enforced by State statute.

HB 175 will also add a provision that gives a reviewer the ability to reject an application for a blasting permit/license which has no appropriate and legal reason for obtaining this permit/license. In addition, once a blasting permit/license has been issued, this bill requires the Office of the State Fire Marshall to notify the Maryland Joint Operations Center.

I respectfully request a favorable report on HB 175