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Judiciary Committee



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

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The Honorable Delegate Luke Clippinger
Chairman of House Judiciary Committee
6 Bladen Street, Annapolis 21401

Testimony for House Bill 540

Good Afternoon, Chair Kaiser, Vice Chair Washington and members of the Ways and Means Committee

I am testifying in favor of House/Senate Bill 540, also known as the State Income and Property Tax Credits – Purple Line Construction Zone

I am providing comments on the importance of this bill for the businesses in Prince George's County that are along the route of the Purple Line. The purple line project is one of the most important transportation projects for the Maryland/DC suburbs since the construction of the Metro rail system. This light rail system will help so many Prince George's County residents easily connect to jobs in Montgomery County and further west to Tysons Corner while reducing their commute times and reducing the number of vehicles on 495 and along East-West Highway.

However, as with any construction project there is always effects on the local working class communities where the route is located. In 2017, Montgomery County and Prince George's County entered into a non-legal binding agreement to maintain affordable housing so that residents will not be displaced by the construction and possible increase in housing valuation by the new light rail project. However, we have not established a mechanism to assist the businesses along the route, the majority of which are small business. In fact there was an article just last month on NPR that indicated that small business owners along the purple line route are worried that they will not be able to reap the benefits of the projects once it still built.

This bill would assist in helping to maintain the life blood of our communities along the route such as the local bakery, the bowling alley, the local restaurant and bar, as well as the local

accountant, doctor and dentist that everyone in the community sees. It is imperative for the residents of Prince George's County that this bill passes this year. The first leg of the Purple Line will open in Prince George's County first. The communities in my district are already feeling the growing pains associated with the construction.

In closing, we urge a favorable vote in favor of House Bill 540 for the business in these local working class communities.

Sincerely,

Nicole A. Williams, Esq.

Delegate Nicole A. Williams, Esq.