

Laurel For The Patuxent, Inc.
Environmental Advocacy in Action

HB 980

Prince George's County - Public Ethics - Definition of Application

Oppose

Dear Honorable members of the Health, Education and Environmental Affairs Committee,

We are writing to add the voice of Laurel for the Patuxent, Inc. to the growing chorus of opposition to HB 980.

In this information age the public expects and deserves transparency in its government. It is the only way to regain and ensure citizens' confidence in their elected officials.

Such transparency provides evidence of ethical - and unethical - behavior by our legislators. The Prince George's County Council has a long history of unethical behavior and lack of transparency when it comes to their dealings with developers. Specifically, accepting campaign contributions from developers and then being asked to vote on zoning, land use and development projects favored by those same developers.

In trying to wordsmith "application," the Prince Georges County Delegation is using HB 980 to again tread the line of ethical governance; this time they are asking the General Assembly of Maryland to fix a mess of their own making.

Sadly, the county's environment and its residents have paid the price for the ethical failings of those who are entrusted with the protection of both.

Facing a climate change crisis, we cannot afford to continue the status quo of developer-dominated decision making, abetted by a County Council that feels free to ignore the Maryland Public Ethics Law when it comes to development within Prince George's County.

We request your unfavorable vote on House Bill 980.

Thank you,

Michael K. McLaughlin
Co-Chair, Laurel For The Patuxent, Inc.