

March 3, 2022

Chair Kumar P. Barve, District 17

Taylor House Office Building, Room 251

6 Bladen Street

Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Chair Kumar P. Barve,

I have been a resident of Prince George's County for more than 60 years and have enjoyed the benefit of working with the Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission's Department of Parks and Recreation for 35 of those years until my retirement in July 2020. As a resident of the 23<sup>rd</sup> Legislative District (Upper Marlboro), **I am writing to express my strong opposition to HB 1057.**

Transparency was lacking from the start when this late filed bill was hastily heard and approved by the full Delegation in less than a week with insufficient review and input from community and stakeholders. It appeared that the only community and stakeholders who knew about the hearing were members of "Team Takeover" who were responsible for producing the video which was shown at the beginning of the hearing on February 7th. I found it quite alarming that all but one of the speakers was in support of HB 1057. The one speaker who was opposed to the bill was the last speaker to be heard and expressed that had it not been for the assistance of a Delegate, her testimony may not have been heard.

If HB-1057 is passed it will establish the Prince George's County Recreation Authority and Blue Ribbon Workgroup to make legal, policy, and fiscal recommendations on HOW to transfer existing recreation programs and personnel to the County. In a nutshell, this is nothing more than a bold attempt to dismantle the Department of Parks and Recreation by moving the Sports, Arts, Youth & Teens, and Senior programs and its employees to the County.

My question is: What statistical data does the County have to support its ability to manage these programs and staff more efficiently and effectively than the Commission? Given its nationally acclaimed recognition as a Six Time National Gold Medal Award Winning Agency for excellence in parks and recreation management, there's no question that the Commission is doing a commendable job in the eyes of many. If there are changes that need to be made to programs and service delivery, then the "Commission" should be given an opportunity to meet with residents and stakeholders and determine just what those changes are and how they can best be implemented.

If not stopped, the impact of this bill may have grave repercussions on the way Prince Georgians continue to receive programs and services as we have come to know them. Let's not forget that the

dedicated staff of the Department of Parks and Recreation are stakeholders too. They work hard to provide a diverse program offering for residents to enjoy. We owe it to them to have a voice in a decision that will ultimately impact how they deliver services, as well as their own livelihood.

**I urge you to VOTE NO to moving HB 1057 forward! Thank you in advance for giving consideration to my request.**

Respectfully,

Debbie Tyner

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