

Walter Redmond and Linda Redmond

We are in full support of HB252, which *mandates that MDOT post and follow a consistent schedule for maintenance and cleaning up litter on State highways in Maryland. We agree that there must be a reliable mechanism in place to better monitor and track whether MDOT is adequately addressing the needs of the community in a more accountable and equitable way. Requiring MDOT to post transparent reports on funding and the distribution of those funds with help the agency assess needs and levels of service adequately.*

While we as citizens and our local leaders must challenge and encourage our families, neighbors and others to be more conscious of disposing our trash in proper locations and while our desire is that everyone will adopt behaviors that will reduce the amount of litter in our County, **the reality is that some people will continue to litter. Grass and bushes will continue to grow along our roadways.** Hence, there must be reliability, accountability, and equity in maintenance of our roadways.

In March 2022, in a letter regarding House Bill 1032 on Highway Cleanup (a bill that died in committee), The State Highway Administration (SHA) stated that "Through 28 statewide maintenance shops and 7 engineering districts spanning 23 counties, the MDOT SHA has in **place a robust litter and highway cleanup process**. These local maintenance shops are responsible for performing highway cleanup and other maintenance activities on their portions of the State's roadway network, within their respective jurisdictions, based on the needs identified. "

Throughout 2022 we did **not see anything robust about the litter** and highway cleanup process out of Maintenance Shop #3 in Upper Marlboro Maryland. Also, since there must have been a concern for that bill to be introduced last year, we did not see anything where SHA made efforts in 2022 to assess whether or not maintenance was robust. Until Delegate Charles began convening monthly community meetings with SHA staff, the struggles at Maintenance Shop #3 and its inability to maintain the roads in the area garnered no attention.

The March 2022 SHA letter also said "On average, \$7.5 million is funded annually to each district and maintenance shop for litter removal; the amount allocated is determined by roadside miles, lane miles, average annual vehicle miles traveled, and level of service. The Upper Marlboro Maintenance Shop has responsibility for 981+ lanes of highway and roadside miles, serves a more densely populated area than most of the other shops, and Roads like 214, 4, 5, 458, 202, all have more close proximity to each other (especially within the I-95 beltway) than roads that serve more wide open spaces.

The average \$7.5 million does not incorporate equity for the District #3 Maintenance Shop and certainly not for the residents of Prince George's County served by that shop. We believe the level of service is grossly inadequate for the population, for the density, and for the lane miles. We believe House Bill 252 needs to become law so there will be more accountability from SHA and more equity across the State especially for Southern Prince George's County where we believe we are left behind and inadequately served by SHA.

With the mounds of litter encountered on the roadways mentioned, 202, 704, 214, 50, 4, 458, 5, and northern parts of 210, SHA needs reliable Sweeper Equipment to maintain these roads. Removing trash by hand from these roadways is inefficient. Likewise, mowing and grass and brush equipment should be upgraded and workable. We believe House Bill 252 needs to become law because as the program continues with service as usual, residents served by Maintenance Shop #3 will continue to be short changed, with over growth of bushes and weeds, layers of trash accumulating month after month, and dated equipment that slows the efforts of limited staff. Please give sincere consideration to making HB252 Maryland law. See attached Pictures of the neglect

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