



FREDERICK COUNTY GOVERNMENT

HB 631 - Eminent Domain - Agricultural and Conservation Easements - Prohibited Taking

DATE: March 6, 2025
COMMITTEE: House Economic Matters Committee
POSITION: Favorable

On behalf of the Frederick County community, we urge the committee to give **HB 631 - Eminent Domain - Agricultural and Conservation Easements - Prohibited Taking** a favorable report.

Frederick County is one of the three Maryland counties that is directly impacted by the proposed Maryland Piedmont Reliability Project (“MPRP”). Our community has been clear that we oppose the project and are concerned about its impact on residents, natural and historic resources, and our economy and quality of life.

Among our concerns is the impact this project will have on preserved and conserved agricultural efforts, a top priority for our community and Frederick County Government. The State of Maryland and Frederick County Government has invested significant resources towards the preservation of agricultural and conservation areas and the proposed MPRP threatens to undermine those investments and directly harm our constituents in the process. HB 631 will prohibit the use of eminent domain on property with agricultural and conservation easements, providing protection for communities like Frederick County.

Upon learning of the MPRP, County Executive Fitzwater directed staff to research the potential impacts to County assets by mapping the parcels and projects that lie within the MPRP’s proposed route. That map can be viewed at <http://www.frederickcountymd.gov/mprp>.

What we learned is that the proposed route would disrupt:

- 13 Forest Resource Ordinance easements
- 3 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation easements
- 1 Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation Foundation district
- 2 Rural Legacy Easements
- 1 Maryland Environmental Trust easements, and
- 2 County Priority Preservation Areas

In addition to the impact this will have on our residents, disrupting these easements will waste taxpayer dollars that were thoughtfully invested in the preservation of natural resources and to support our agricultural economy.

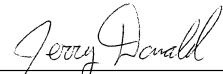
HB 631 is a necessary legislative change to prevent that negative outcome.

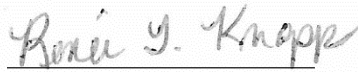
Thank you for your consideration of HB 631 and we urge a favorable report.

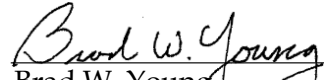
Respectfully,



Jessica Fitzwater
County Executive

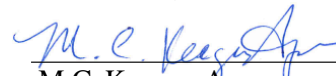

Kavonté Duckett
County Council Vice President

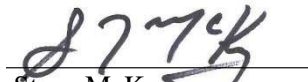

Jerry Donald
County Council Member


Renee Knapp
County Council Member


Brad W. Young
County Council President


Mason Carter
County Council Member


M.C. Keegan-Ayer
County Council Member


Steve McKay
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