

Testimony in Strong Support of House Bill 1525

Presented to the Maryland General Assembly

Rules and Executive Nominations Committee

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By: Mayor Cashenna A. Cross, City of Glenarden

Chairperson, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee,

I come before you today not just as a municipal leader, but as a fierce advocate for accountability, fairness, and the integrity of local governance. I am here to express my strong and unwavering support for House Bill 1525, a bill that is not only necessary but long overdue.

This legislation, introduced by Delegates Harrison and Toles, prohibits municipalities from annexing land outside of their legislative districts—a critical safeguard against unchecked expansion that threatens fair representation, transparent governance, and equitable service delivery.

A Dangerous Precedent: Unchecked Annexation

Allowing municipalities to annex land beyond their legislative districts opens the door to chaos, confusion, and political manipulation. When a municipality crosses legislative boundaries, it:

- Disrupts jurisdictional accountability—Who is truly responsible for the residents of these annexed areas? The municipality? The state delegate?
- Creates conflicts in essential services—Public safety, infrastructure, and emergency response should never be caught in a jurisdictional tug-of-war.
- Dilutes voter representation—Residents could find themselves governed by municipal officials who are not aligned with their legislative delegates, creating a fragmented and disjointed system.

This bill is not about restricting municipal growth—it is about ensuring that growth happens in a way that serves the people, not political or financial interests.

Protecting Representation and Resources

Prince George's County, like many other areas in Maryland, operates within a carefully structured framework of legislative districts. These districts exist for a reason. They ensure that representation is equitable, resources are allocated fairly, and residents know who is advocating for their needs.

Cross-district annexation dismantles this balance and could lead to:

- Gerrymandering at the municipal level—annexation could be used as a tool to shift power dynamics, altering voting populations for political gain.
- Unfair distribution of tax revenue—funding intended for one district could be absorbed by a municipality with different priorities.
- A breakdown in public trust—when residents feel their representation is being undermined, confidence in government erodes.

The Urgency of This Legislation

House Bill 1525 is not just a policy adjustment—it is a necessary defense against reckless municipal overreach. It preserves the intent and structure of legislative districts, ensures proper governance, and protects the voices of the people.

The time for action is now. Without this law in place, we leave the door open for a dangerous precedent that could spiral out of control. We must stand firm in defense of responsible governance, fair representation, and community stability.

Final Call to Action

I urge this committee to stand on the right side of history. Do not allow municipal expansion to become a tool for confusion and political maneuvering. Pass House Bill 1525 and protect the integrity of our communities.

Thank you.

Mayor Cashenna A. Cross

City of Glenarden, Maryland

Quick Reference Resources

- Maryland General Assembly Bill Tracking: mgaleg.maryland.gov
- Prince George's County Legislative District Maps: [Prince George's County](#)
- Maryland Municipal League Policy on Annexation: [MML Official Site](#)
- Maryland Department of Planning - Municipal Boundaries and Growth: [MDP Annexation Overview](#)

House Bill 1525 is a shield against chaos, a guarantee of fair representation, and a safeguard for the future of Maryland's municipalities. I urge you to pass it without hesitation.