

Supporting Testimony for Senator Brooks Senate Bill 318

Maryland General Assembly
Budget and Taxation Committee,

I fully support Senator Brooks Senate Bill to provide Public Outreach and Community Engagement for future State Projects. Our community was totally unaware of the Hilton Tower LMR Radio Project. The size and scope of this project (details below) was a total shock to residents. The project had been in the works for years and the plans were completed, only waiting for funding. The community only found out about the project due to bands on some trees in the park which led to a community FIA request which allowed procurement of the Project Details.

Based on the size and scope of the project, the community embarked on hand-delivering fliers, sending emails, a letter-writing campaign, and Facebook posts which led to Senator Brooks arranging a meeting between residents and DoIT. Again, it was a monumental task (another set of hand-delivered fliers and Facebook posts) to get the word out to residents of the meeting. The onus should not be on the community to find out about State Projects, then the added responsibility to organize residents, create and distribute fliers, writing letters, sending emails, etc. to obtain information about State Projects and find a legislative representative to hold meetings. The onus should be on the State. *This bill will ensure that the public is adequately notified of such State projects in the future.*

Holding a public meeting engages the community so they have an adequate understanding of the need for the project and assurances that adequate due diligence was done when determining the final project plans.

Allowing a public comment period will allow the residents the ability to ask questions and gain a better understanding of the project and have an opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns.

State Projects should be advertised, and the public be allowed to comment.

Project Details: This is only provided to give an understanding of the size and scope of the project that led Senator Brooks to draft this legislation.

- 348' tower, its height requiring Blinking red/white lights, to alert aircraft. Tower will be located <1000' from a residential neighborhood.
- Tower Compound: 80' x 80' compound surrounded by a 10' chain link fence topped with barbed wire, housing the tower, a generator, 120-gallon propane tank, and shed.
- Tower Compound will be located less than 100' feet off of Hilton Ave, entrance to Hilton Area of Patapsco State Park viewable by cars, bikers, runners, walkers, and campers
- The State's balloon tests show wide ranging visibility to ~1200 homes.

Sincerely,
Thomas H. Curtier,
Catonsville Resident