

## Testimony in support of Senate Bill 318

### Maryland General Assembly, Budget and Taxation Committee,

I fully support Senator Brooks legislation, SB318, to require “public engagement and community outreach” for future State Capital Projects. Several communities: Patapsco Woods; Oak Forest; Winners Circle; Foxhall Farms; College Hills, etc., were impacted by not being informed of the Hilton Radio Tower Project until it had been approved and was waiting to be added to the BPW board Agenda for funding. Our communities found out about the project due to a FIA request, triggered by white bands on trees that were to be felled, near the entrance to the Hilton Area of Patapsco State Park. The lack of public notification and lack of transparency understandably led to discontent among the community and frustration at the lack of process to voice our comments to appropriate organizations.

Once we found out about the project, it was an uphill challenge to inform the affected communities. As we found out more information, fliers were created and hand delivered to hundreds of residents. To address this challenge we faced, I especially support the public notification of future projects (in a local newspaper, online notices, mailings).

One of our fliers encouraged a letter-writing campaign which led to a public meeting. This legislation will ensure there will be a public meeting, and a public comment period, thus taking that responsibility from the residents and placing it on the project managers. This is a much more streamlined and concise way to inform the public.

In summary, keeping the community engaged in the process will go a long way in fostering understanding of the project’s goals and allow feedback on how it will affect their community. Senator Brooks legislation will ensure there is more visibility, public engagement, and public notification for future Capital Projects.

Thank you,  
Mary T. Curtier  
Resident, Patapsco Woods