

Economic Matters Committee
House Bill 1550
Unfavorable

Honorable Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee;

Please give House Bill 1550 an unfavorable report.

I'm not going to read 72 pages. I'm not even going to skim 72 pages. What I will do is make a few points:

My grandparents lost their land in Pennsylvania to eminent domain when my father and uncle were minors. The state wanted to turn their and their neighbors' land into Pinchot State Park. I have mixed feelings about that: I'm really glad that I was born and grew up in Prince George's County, Maryland, and not in Pennsylvania, AND I think that it was awful to take the land of multiple families in order to make a state park. We returned to the land with ever-decreasing family members to spread their ashes on their former land over the years.

However, eminent domain is an important tool. Right now, there's an ongoing battle to get a sidewalk built along a road near my house, especially so that school children don't have to walk in the street to get to and from the two schools along it. There isn't a shoulder on the road – people are hugging the side of the road so they don't get hit by the cars (and absurd number of pickup trucks) that tend to speed by. Many heartless people along the street don't want to give up a few feet of their land in order to make the community (CHILDREN!!!) safe.

Using eminent domain for community safety reasons is completely different from using it to build a Walmart or a park. I urge an unfavorable vote on HB1550. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Debi Jasen
Pasadena, MD