



GREENBELT CITY COUNCIL

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TESTIMONY

HB1178 - Local Government – Municipal Annexation – Consent Requirements

Position: Oppose

The City of Greenbelt opposes HB1178. The City has already begun the formal process to annex several contiguous areas adjacent to the City's existing municipal boundaries. The City Council has initiated legislative action and scheduled public hearings regarding the annexation of three large areas of federally-owned land, including property associated with the Beltsville Agricultural Research Center, NASA, and WMATA. These annexations involve more than 2,000 acres and have been under active discussion, planning, and public process for many months.

City Council has already appropriated funds for surveys, mapping, and legal work to move the annexation process forward and has publicly announced hearings to receive community input and advance the process toward implementation. The annexation effort is not theoretical or speculative. It is underway now.

HB1178 would significantly change the rules mid-process and create new consent requirements that would directly interfere with the City's ongoing annexation initiative. The bill would require municipalities to obtain consent from members of the General Assembly delegation before annexing land located in a different legislative district, inserting a new state-level veto point into a process that is already underway and adding uncertainty and delay to projects that have already begun public hearings and legal proceedings.

The bill would also require municipalities to obtain consent from governmental entities that own land before annexation can occur. The City's current annexation efforts specifically involve federally-owned and regional properties. The proposed legislation would impose a new barrier that did not exist when the City initiated its annexation resolutions and began its public process.

Finally, the bill would require consent from tax-exempt entities before annexation of their land. The City's annexation initiative includes large areas of tax-exempt federal property, and HB1178 would fundamentally alter the legal framework governing the City's work after the process has already begun.

Collectively, these new requirements would create significant uncertainty, delay, and potential disruption to a major municipal initiative that is already in progress and that has required substantial public investment, staff time, and community engagement. For these reasons, the City respectfully requests an unfavorable report on HB1178.

For more information, please contact City Manager Josué Salmerón at 301-474-8000 or jsalmeron@greenbeltmd.gov.

Submitted by Carrington & Associates, LLC on behalf of the City of Greenbelt.