

HB 1178_Delegate Harrison_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Andrea Harrison

Position: FAV

ANDREA FLETCHER HARRISON
Legislative District 24
Prince George's County

Appropriations Committee
Vice Chair, Racing and Sports
Facilities Subcommittee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 207
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3919
800-492-7122 Ext. 3919
AndreaFletcher.Harrison@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Written Testimony for HB 1178 – Municipalities – Annexation – Limitations

April 2, 2026

Good afternoon, Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee. I am Delegate Andrea Harrison seeking your support for HB 1178 which provides limitations to the annexation of property by Municipalities.

Annexation serves as a vital mechanism for municipalities to adapt to growth and enhance tax revenue. However, when these changes cross the boundaries of legislative districts, they jeopardize the fundamental principles of equitable representation. The implications of municipal annexation across legislative districts also directly impacts the lives of countless citizens who deserve clear and effective representation.

When annexation crosses legislative districts and it is not during the decennial census, it undermines the essential relationship between constituents and their elected representatives. Further, it will lead to unequal population distribution. It creates a landscape where communities may be fragmented among multiple legislators, causing confusion and frustration about whom to turn to for advocacy and support. This dilution of representation can significantly weaken community voices and may result in unequal service provision. The fragmentation of representation may complicate negotiations and decision-making processes regarding essential funding and support for newly annexed regions. Such complexities can lead to conflicts and delays, ultimately stunting the growth and development of some areas and overgrowth of others, sometimes within the same community or that of the immediate adjacent community.

The rich tapestry of our communities is woven from shared values, history, and social connections. When annexation disrupts these established identities by linking residents to unfamiliar locales, it can foster disconnection and alienation. Preserving community identity is paramount to building strong, resilient neighborhoods.

To safeguard the interests of our communities and ensure fair representation, I strongly advocate for the implementation of clear limitations on municipal annexation across legislative districts.

These measures should include:

- Establish strict criteria that require any annexation to align with existing legislative boundaries, protecting the cohesive representation of residents, at least until the decennial census.
- Prohibit annexation across legislative districts without the consent of the legislative delegation of the proposed annexed locale.

- Prohibit annexation of land owned by United States of America, a political sub-division, department, agency, or bi-county commission of the State of Maryland without the consent of the respective entity.
- Prohibit the annexation of property owned by a tax-exempt religious entity without the consent of the respective entity.
- Insist on processes of thorough community involvement, such as public hearings and consultations, transparent and comprehensive planning that thoughtfully considers the implications of annexation thus ensuring that all stakeholders have an equitable say.

As I conclude, let me emphasize that addressing the challenge of annexation across legislative districts is not merely an administrative task; it's a moral imperative. We must uphold the integrity of our communities and ensure that every citizen has a meaningful voice in their representation. By enacting thoughtful limitations, we can foster stronger, unified communities that honor residents' identities while ensuring equitable services and representation. Remember, not everyone wants to live or own property within a municipality. Those individuals who have purchased property made a conscious decision on where they wanted to live or own property.

I am requesting a favorable report of HB 1178. Thank you for your attention and consideration.

Carrington 2026 Greenbelt HB1178 annexation oppose

Uploaded by: Darrell Carrington

Position: UNF



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.

HB1178 - Testimony - COG.pdf

Uploaded by: Sarah Peters

Position: UNF



February 23, 2026

Bill: HB 1178 – Municipalities - Annexation – Limitations

Position: Oppose

Dear Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

On behalf of the City of Gaithersburg, I am writing to express our opposition to HB 1178. This legislation would restrict municipalities from annexing land located in a legislative district outside of a district in which all or part of the municipality is located without first obtaining consent from the General Assembly delegation representing that district.

With no remaining “greenfield” sites within our current borders, future growth for the City of Gaithersburg will depend in part on annexing properties beyond our municipal boundaries. The City of Gaithersburg establishes a Maximum Expansion Limit (MEL) to define boundaries for future annexations of unincorporated land, as mandated by Maryland State Code for municipal growth planning. Only land within the MEL can be considered for annexation and municipalities may only annex land that adjoins its boundaries. The process for including sites beyond our existing boundaries in the MEL is clearly defined, and ample opportunity is provided for elected officials and the public to weigh in on any proposed changes to the MEL as part of the Growth Element of the city’s Master Plan.

Legislative district boundaries can change over time, and this bill introduces new state oversight into local annexation procedures. HB 1178 erodes municipal annexation authority and would add an extra step to the already sluggish process, potentially extending timelines, creating uncertainty, increasing costs, and deleteriously impacting future population growth and economic expansion.

For these reasons, the City of Gaithersburg respectfully urges an unfavorable report on HB 1178. Thank you for your consideration and please let me know if you have any questions.

Respectfully submitted,

Jud Ashman, Mayor
City of Gaithersburg

City of Gaithersburg • 31 South Summit Avenue, Gaithersburg, Maryland 20877-2038
301-258-6300 • FAX 301-948-6149 • cityhall@gaitthersburgmd.gov • gaitthersburgmd.gov

MAYOR
Jud Ashman

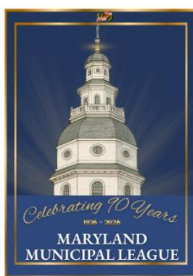
COUNCIL MEMBERS
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CITY MANAGER
Tanisha R. Briley

MML - HB 1178 - Sen INFO.pdf

Uploaded by: Justin Fiore

Position: INFO



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment

DATE: April 2, 2026

POSITION: Informational

BILL: HB 1178

The Maryland Municipal League (MML) is neutral on HB 1178 with the House amendments, which now requires notification of state legislators when an annexation would cross state legislative lines.

Municipalities often seek to annex adjacent areas to promote orderly growth, enhance service delivery, and address community needs. Currently, local governments are required to publish three public notices for the required public hearing on a proposed annexation.

Requiring consent, as the bill was introduced, gives us great concern.

The proposed restriction based on legislative district boundaries, which are primarily designed for electoral purposes, does not align with the practical considerations of municipal planning and development. Introducing legislative district boundaries as a limiting factor would add an arbitrary constraint that will undermine existing annexation plans and service delivery across the state. Furthermore, if HB 1178 were enacted as introduced, municipal annexation plans would face potential upheaval each time the state undergoes redistricting.

The provision requiring consent from another government entity (county or state) to annex land they own is a solution in search of a problem. Currently, annexation is a collaborative process that requires public hearings and significant community input. By granting a "veto" to a county or state agency simply because they hold title to a parcel of land, HB 1178 ignores the broader public interest. If a community wants to be annexed into a municipality to have water and sewer extended to their properties, they shouldn't have to seek additional approvals or wait 10 years and hope the next redistricting commission moves the line.

We ask you to keep this in mind when considering HB 1178.

For more information relating to this piece of testimony, please contact:

Justin Fiore: Director, Advocacy and Public Policy, justinf@mdmunicipal.org