



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

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