



TESTIMONY

COMMITTEE: House Government, Labor, and Elections

DATE: February 26, 2026

POSITION: Unfavorable

BILL: HB 1178

The Maryland Municipal League opposes House Bill 1178, which would prohibit a municipality from annexing land that is located in a different legislative district without consent of the legislative Delegation. It would also prohibit a municipality from annexing land owned by another government entity without their consent.

Municipalities often seek to annex adjacent areas to promote orderly growth, enhance service delivery, and address community needs. 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 adds an arbitrary constraint that will undermine existing annexation plans and service delivery across the state. Furthermore, if HB 1178 were enacted, 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.

The Financial Implications:

Annexation is often the best way to fund new housing projects and infrastructure. When a municipality is forced to wait for consent from an external government body, costs for materials and labor increase. This bill doesn't just delay or stunt growth; it makes it more expensive for the taxpayers who eventually receive those services.

For these reasons the League respectfully requests that this committee provide an unfavorable report on House Bill 1178.

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

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