



of the Anacostia River
P.O. Box 4314
Silver Spring, MD 20914

Testimony on HB 1091: Public-Private Partnerships - Reform

Lead Sponsor: Delegate Solomon

Hearing in the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee: 4/3/19 at 1:00 p.m.

Position: SUPPORT

I submit this testimony in support of HB1091 on behalf of the Neighbors of the Northwest Branch of the Anacostia River (NNWB), a 501(c)(3) volunteer organization dedicated to the ecological restoration of the Northwest Branch, with members in Montgomery and Prince Georges counties. Thanks are due to the sponsors of this bill, Delegates Solomon, Carr, Korman, Stewart, and Wilkins.

The focus of my organization is naturally on the environmental impact, specifically stream impacts, of mega projects such as the expanded highways envisioned by Governor Hogan that he has proposed using the P3 mechanism. The Beltway, already 8 lanes as it crosses the Northwest Branch, would expand to 12. According to Montgomery Parks, there are already 631 acres of impervious surfaces within SHA's ROW—most of which had no stormwater management treatment—and these untreated acres are the “major contributing factor to the impaired water quality” of Montgomery County's streams.¹ In addition to the Northwest Branch, the Beltway and I-270 cross and pollute Long Branch, Sligo Creek, Rock Creek, and Cabin John Creek. What would likely be the result of adding more lanes plus the large staging areas such a project needs? We should know up front.

HB 1091 would require a completed environmental impact statement in the presolicitation report for projects costing \$500 million or more. In a state that cares about its water, its parks, and its quality of life, this is entirely reasonable. By conducting the

¹ Memorandum dated July 5, 2018 from Jai Cole, Acting Chief Park Planning and Stewardship Division and Matt Harper, Acting Natural Resource Manager, PPSD, to Mike Riley, Director, M-NCPPC Montgomery Parks.

environmental review first, state officials, as well as potential bidders, will know up front the extent of the environmental challenges of the project. Potential bidders will be able to factor into their plans the cost of environmental mitigation. State officials might decide the project is not worth the environmental cost and seek out other alternatives to address our mobility problems with less damage to our Maryland.

I urge your favorable consideration of HB 1091, and urge you to ensure that it is written to apply to the P3 project currently under consideration to expand the Beltway and I-270. HB 1091 does not prevent this expansion; it provides the rational process such a large project deserves in a state that treasures the quality of life of its citizens. Thank you for your consideration.



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