

Dear Governor Hogan, Treasurer Kopp, and Comptroller Franchot:

While we understand our state's need to improve the awful congestion on its main highways, the North College Park Citizens Association opposes any expansion of I-495 which will negatively impact the property values and quality-of-life of its residents and small businesses. Many of our residents have lived and raised families adjacent to the highway for decades. Also, many of these residents operate home businesses for their livelihood.

While these residents quietly maintained their property and paid state taxes, rapid urbanization and expansion took place all throughout the DC area, making a lot of well-connected developers wealthy via real estate tax incentives, but also causing constant highway bottlenecks on I-495 due to increased population density. Our residents are essentially being expected to shoulder the burden of this urbanization by having their properties truncated or even removed, as well as their home noise levels raised and local mobility reduced.

Should this expansion move forward, our local residents must be compensated for their losses. We suggest a mandatory sinking-fund set aside from all private corporate revenues earned on toll lanes, similar to how a portion of casino earnings are often dedicated toward public purposes like schools. These funds would go to homeowners and businesses negatively impacted by the project.

Our concerns are about basic fairness for residents. Since large outside private sector parties would be making significant revenue from any expansion project for decades, our residents should receive reasonable relief for their losses beyond the pittance often established by eminent domain law. We appreciate any and all consideration of these matters as you continue to weigh the costs and benefits of various project options. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jordan Schakner, Treasurer  
North College Park Citizens' Association