



Date: February 16, 2023

Subject: Listserv Posting Regarding Supporting HB1195- Development Transparency Act

The Howard County Citizens Association (HCCA) commends and thanks Delegate Chao Wu for actively supporting transparency and sponsoring HB1195 - Development Transparency Act of 2023. HCCA and other civic advocates need this transparency update. Adoption should occur to safeguard the public interest in land use petitions.

The Development Transparency Act of 2023, House Bill 1195, requires disclosure of the name of each individual who owns a petitioning entity, including any individual who owns an affiliated entity. There is no reason why entities that petition for land use tax benefits, tax incentives, exemptions, waivers and other beneficial treatments, should be hidden. An amendment percentage threshold could address concerns regarding low percentage numbers/high numbers of owners.

The public should be fully informed and protected in the initial decision-making process. Sometimes entities claim that their proposals are "beneficial to the public", when, in reality, they could exacerbate deteriorating public health and overall economic well-being. Local petitions for county favors, waivers, and sometimes contentious uses, need to have identified beneficiaries to properly note to the community where planned implementations are likely to readily occur.

More must be done to protect the public interest, and allow for more meaningful feedback. Officials could be misled by incomplete information. Please support HB1195.

Lisa Markovitz

VP HCCA