

ADDRESS

Re: Support of Senate Bill 0229/House Bill 0292

Dear Senator/Delegate,

I am writing in support of Senate Bill 0229/House Bill 0292 (Toll Roads, Highways, and Bridges - County Government Consent Requirement – Expansion).

My name is Joseph and I reside in District 47A in Mount Rainier. I am a father of two and do own a car, which has been used to travel I-495, but myself and my children also breathe the air as well. In particular my children attend school 2 miles directly downwind of I-495 and will have direct health impacts from expansion of I-495.

First I wanted to thank you for co-sponsoring this bill. While this is not the panacea¹ to our transportation woes, the Western shore counties should be treated in equally and have the same rights to make decisions about the air our children breathe and whose homes are taken for space for cars. The arguments against this right seem to come from those that choose to live further and further away and are going to drive leaving our community with worst air and having more people uprooted from their homes. I don't think that this is acceptable, especially given that air quality in Prince George's County is typically the worst in the Washington, DC metropolitan area, exceeding federal health based standards.² Furthermore evidence shows that this air pollution comes more from road users than any other source.³ Given the history of the decisions of how and where highways, having the right to veto toll roads is even more important to Prince George's County.⁴

I urge you to work with your colleagues to develop a veto proof majority so that Prince George's County can be treated equally with regards to decisions about our roadways.

Thanks,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Joseph Jakuta". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Joseph" and last name "Jakuta" clearly distinguishable.

Joseph Jakuta

¹ There are some other bills that the Maryland General Assembly needs to pass as well and I will write under separate cover on those.

² <https://mde.maryland.gov/programs/Air/AirQualityMonitoring/Pages/HistoricalData.aspx>

³ <https://otcair.org/upload/Documents/Reports/OTC%20MANE-VU%202011%20Based%20Modeling%20Platform%20Support%20Document%20October%202018%20-%20Final.pdf> (Page D-193)

⁴ <https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2016/03/role-of-highways-in-american-poverty/474282/>