


**NO
BAY
BRIDGE
TO KENT**



September 10, 2018

VIA EMAIL & FIRST CLASS MAIL

Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Proposed Bay Bridge Extension

Dear Governor Hogan:

I am a former resident of Kent County and have been hoping to call it home again in the near future. However, if the plan to build a Bay Bridge extension to Kent County goes forward, those plans will sadly change. I love Kent County, as do my friends and family – it is a sanctuary for me as much as it is for the abundant wildlife that depends on it for survival. I have a young daughter who has come to love it as well and has shared that love with her own friends, some having become smitten themselves. Don't you think that is quite a compliment? Kent County is appealing to the youth of today – and that is yet another reason why it must be preserved! Therefore, I am adding my voice to the many who've already spoken and begging you not to allow the MDTA ruin the Eastern Shore, but to keep it safe for the next generation of residents, farmers, watermen and tourists who help make it so special. Kent County is truly the jewel in Maryland's crown – why would you allow them to destroy it?

Recent statistics show that approximately *75% of the land in Kent County is utilized for agricultural purposes*, with 54% of that land rated as prime – that is fantastic! Protective zoning has enabled farmers to prosper without commercial uses eroding away the land mass needed to keep agriculture viable in Kent County, but a new bay bridge and all the traffic that would create would have a devastating impact on the farming community, not to mention preserved lands, tourism and historical landmarks. It would be a tragedy for one of the most beautiful places in the country to end up nothing more than a suburb of Baltimore. Look at what has become of New Jersey, the "*Garden State*", where I now reside and would like to compare for you.

There is a stark difference between North Jersey and South Jersey, with the north being far more urban and the south having more open space, much like the Eastern Shore. Urban sprawl from NYC and Newark has had a negative impact on the land with over-development of low density, single-family homes on large lots, dependence on cars to get around, and little public open space left the farther north you go. Automobile-related pollution, loss of farmland, increased rates of obesity and unsustainable property tax increases are just some of the effects of sprawl here. New Jersey has finally realized that we must be more intelligent in how we develop if we are to have any land left at all. However, thanks to urban sprawl, it must develop because there are too many people and not enough affordable housing for them to live in. Buying a home is extremely difficult for most due to this and also the fact that property tax increases have become unsustainable. In an attempt to remedy this, NJ has finally turned toward smart-growth

Governor Lawrence J. Hogan, Jr.
September 10, 2018
Page 2

development in recent years which, by contrast, seeks to direct growth to areas where *infrastructure already exists*, where higher densities make the provision of public services less expensive, and where different kinds of uses can be located near each other for easy access by residents, where the same amount of land produces higher tax revenues, and where *transportation options other than cars are readily available*. Before Maryland ends up like New Jersey, ask yourself – ***has the MDTA truly considered all other possible transportation methods and explored all other options?***

In the 2006 study that was done, MDTA estimated that bridge traffic would be at *135,000 by the year 2025 on summer weekends, with weekday traffic at approximately 86,000*. However, in the new statements about traffic on the bridge, it appears that *those numbers will not be reached until 2040*. **Why are those projections so different now and, if the numbers are not projected to be as high until 15 years later now, why the rush to force a decision now on the bridge project?** Clearly there is either a major discrepancy and these projections are inaccurate (in which case they cannot be relied upon), or there is less urgency now due to the new projections so other options can still be explored. If our generation is not up to the task of solving this problem in a meaningful way, then why not give the next generation a crack at it? Do not underestimate the youth of our country – after all, it is their future and they have the most to lose. Invest in the next generation so they might be better equipped to find a viable solution!

Smart growth supports the preservation of farmland by *directing development away from agricultural land and preserving that land for farm use*. Maryland should preserve Kent County, not only for the sake of agricultural use, but for the sake of the wildlife, the history, the people and the beauty of the land itself. Destroying all of this simply to create more beach traffic to Ocean City isn't smart at all – it's asinine. Please urge the MDTA to think again and learn from NJ's mistakes: save your lands and, in turn, Maryland's future.

Very truly yours,

