

**TESTIMONY OF
ALAN S. BOWSER
HOUSE BILL 80
PURPLE LINE TREE REPLACEMENT PLAN
JANUARY 19, 2021**

Dear Chairman Barve and Member of the Committee

As President of the Park Hills Civic Association in Silver Spring, I am writing in **strong support of HB80 - Department of Transportation and Department of the Environment - Purple Line Tree Replacement Plan** to require the Maryland Department of Transportation (MDOT) to replace trees lost to construction in communities along the Purple Line route, with a priority on environmental and economic justice communities. The significant loss of tree canopy from Bethesda to New Carrollton has created heat islands, diminished air quality, and a visual wound through residential and commercial neighborhoods.

Perhaps the best example of this is in our Park Hills neighborhood in Silver Spring where the Purple Line alignment has resulted in the removal of hundreds of trees along Wayne Avenue from Fenton Street to Manchester Road.

My neighbors have repeatedly expressed their frustration with the less-than-candid representations made by MDOT with regard to their plans for both tree removal and for replacing the tree canopy. Following MDOT's preliminary--now halted--work on the Purple Line in our neighborhood, the beauty of our community has been dramatically diminished, while warm weather temperatures have soared due to lack of shade, previously provided by the many mature shade trees.

If there is a possibility that trees that have been removed by the Purple Line project can be replaced on or near the alignment, replacing and strengthening our tree canopy, then the Maryland General Assembly should do whatever it can to make that possible.

The bill's components to develop a plan to replace trees removed during Purple Line construction and for MDOT to consult with residents and others about the replacement plan are both timely and essential.

We commend Delegate Lorig Charkoudian for this legislative proposal and her inspired representation of our community.

This important bill merits your strong support.

Thank you for moving HB0080 out of committee with a favorable review.

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