



*North County Preservation, Inc*  
*P.O. Box 537 • Monkton, MD 21111*

March 25, 2014

Edward Kasemeyer  
Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Re: Program Open Space

Dear Senator Kasemeyer,

North County Preservation is an organization of individuals committed to the preservation and enhancements of the rural areas of the northern part of Baltimore County. This goal is complementary to efforts to preserve and enhance the urban areas of the county. Rural Legacy, Maryland Agricultural Land Preservation, and state programs to preserve open space within the built-up areas all are critical tools to help us and others reach this overall goal.

We are strongly opposed to any plan to reduce or redirect the Program Open Space funds, especially the latest reported plan to cap the amount of real estate transfer taxes that should legally be dedicated to the Program, just at a time when we had hoped that the general real estate market would finally improve and provide the level of funding that has not been available in recent years. Until it fully recovers, it provides a cost-effective way to obtain more preserved land.

Program Open Space funds should not be viewed as an "expense", but rather an "investment" in the future. 100% of the money spent goes into land and facilities which only appreciates in value over time. It is a bargain for the citizens of Maryland. Open space is crucial to an improved standard of living and environment for everyone, ensuring, in the long term, that Maryland remains one of the most attractive states in which to live and work. Further, agricultural land preservation is essential to maintaining Maryland's position as a provider of food for an increasing population.

On behalf of the many residents in our area deeply interested in preservation, we ask that you reject any Capital Budget Subcommittee report which recommends such drastic potential cuts in POS funding, especially on top of the past several years' reductions.

Thank you for your careful consideration on this matter.

Regards,

Michael Pierce  
President, North County Preservation

410 817-4795