July 27, 2009

VIA OVERNIGHT MAIL

The Honorable Martin O'Malley
Governor, State of Maryland
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401-1925

The Honorable Thomas V. Mike Miller
President, Senate of Maryland
State House, H-107
Annapolis, MD 21401-1991

RE: Council Chairwoman Marilyn Bland and County Council's -- South County Land Rezoning Proposition

Dear Governor O'Malley and Senator Miller:

I am writing this letter on behalf of myself and all individuals who share my viewpoint and who are in opposition to the proposed rezoning of land in the rural tier in Accokeek, Maryland. It has come to my attention that Council Chairwoman Marilyn Bland and the County Council have arbitrarily decided to rezone land in Accokeek, Maryland that has, according to the current Primary Subregion 5 Master Plan, been slated for preservation in the rural tier. In fact, Ms. Bland's attempt to impose these revisions is against the advisement of the MNCPPC Planning Board. This fact disregards years of data collected by the planning board, nullifies all the efforts of the planning team, and goes against the multitudes of opposition by the taxpaying residents of Accokeek, numerous Accokeek community activists, the Accokeek Mattawoman Piscataway Council, the Greater Accokeek Civic Association, the Moyaone Association, the Indian Head Highway Area Action Council, and the Henry G. Ferguson PTA. Collectively, these entities represent thousands of individuals in opposition to this proposed revision.

Moreover, the revision the Council is proposing clauses to strip the taxpaying citizens of Accokeek the right to have a future voice in rezoning matters. Further, such a clause would preclude citizens from any rights even as to what should or should not be built in our community! Not only is such a prospect aberrant, it sets a dangerous

precedent not only for Accokeek, but for neighboring counties in the State of Maryland and will ease opportunity for corruption and back door dealings between developers and those elected to implement and uphold the laws of this state.

The Council's revision, though legally within the powers availed to them as council members, is viewed as deplorable and reflects a blatant disregard for the will of the people of Accokeek. Not only is this viewed as an outrage and abuse of power, but there is concern that the Council's act collectively is a retaliatory measure to punish the multitudes of people who have voiced their dissatisfaction with the quality of service and decisions made by Ms. Bland and some members of the governing body to date. Similarly, we concede this proposition could be an alternative of sorts to the failed Homestead Tax Increase initiative. Admittedly, also, it is reasonable to deduce that motivation for rezoning the land in Accokeek for commercial use may well be the fruit of an agenda unbeknownst to the general public. Regardless, this *modus operandi* is tantamount to ancient methods of state governance, those that were contemptuous to the will of the people. And, while we are aware that typically your offices may not involve yourselves in lower-level state matters, we believe this matter is one of such great import that it requires your oversight and advisement.

That said, both of you and our President have shown commitment to transparency and accountability in governmental operations and I believe that the citizens of Accokeek and generally all citizens in the State of Maryland are entitled to have their voices heard and entitled to have their voices make a difference in the governance of their communities. The people of Accokeek have already spoken on this issue of commercialization of the 200 acres of land proposed to be rezoned. This proposed revision is completely adverse to the desires of Accokeek residents and to the commitment by the State of Maryland in conjunction with President Obama's call for transparency and accountability in government at all levels. To that end, immediate action needs to be taken to stop this display of arrogant disregard for the voices of the people in Accokeek.

From a technical perspective, the Subregion 5 Master Plan preserved the land in Accokeek not only as a means to protect quality of life, environmental conditions, historical preservation, the ramifications of infrastructure (which have yet to be addressed), the element of increased crime and lower emergency response times that would result, but as important, if not more so, for the education of our children who are our future. Rezoning this land for commercial use would sabotage the efforts intended to build the schools (so desperately needed) that are indicated in the current Subregion Plan. As an aside, I personally have lived in Accokeek for 32 years and have been receptive as have most of us to the quaint shopping centers that exist. We find that traveling to neighboring areas, such as the Bloom Shopping Center, Manokeek Shopping Village and the shopping available in Waldorf is more than sufficient to meet our shopping needs. Further, we now have the National Harbor – a ten minute drive away. The people of Accokeek moved here to have peace, a wholesome place for our children to grow,

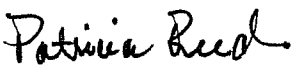
privacy and a haven from the busyness that accompanies urban and suburban sprawl that will result if such a measure were approved.

Finally, it is a sad and frightening day when the people who have been elected to represent their constituents turn their backs, ignore the voices of the people and make corrupt and underhanded decisions that adversely affect the lives of the people they are elected to represent *simply because they can*. There is an underlying element of character that is paramount for any leader, political or otherwise – *integrity*. There have been multiple incidents in recent years wherein integrity and motivation can be reasonably called into question.

Therefore, please accept this letter as a formal request for explanation, investigation and cessation of Ms. Bland's and the County Council's intention to rezone the rural tier in Accokeek and as a formal request that the current Subregion 5 Master Plan be passed as intended with no additional rezoning for commercial use in Accokeek, Maryland. The people of Accokeek have vehemently spoken and it is time for the governing bodies to listen – that time is now.

I am exceedingly grateful for the opportunity to share this information with you both and look forward to hearing from your offices regarding this issue as soon as possible.

Very truly yours,



Patricia Reed
Community Advocate for the People

cc: James V. Proctor, Delegate
Joseph Vallario, Jr., Delegate
Wendy Irminger, MNCPPC
Chris Izzo, MNCPPC
AmpCreek's Council
Greater Accokeek Civic Association
Moyaone Association
Indian Head Highway Area Action Council
Henry G. Fergueson PTA
Kelly Canavan, Accokeek Community Activist
Ovetta Wiggins, The Washington Post
Joshua Garner, The Gazette
Daniel Valentine, The Gazette
Nancy Bromley McConaty, Maryland Independent