



February 20, 2012

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway
Chair, Senate Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee
Miller Senate Office Building, 2W
11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Senate Bill 236 (Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012) – Oppose

Dear Madam Chair:

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce, representing 475 members, **opposes** Senate Bill 236 (Sustainable Growth and Agricultural Preservation Act of 2012).

Without substantial amendments, this measure gives too much power to the Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) and the Maryland Department of Planning (MDP) at the expense of local governments, and the Chamber believes it will have a substantial burden and cost on small businesses here in Carroll County.

In Carroll County, MDE does not allow or severely restricts growth in the “Priority Funding Areas” because of a lack of available water, which pushes growth into the green fields. This bill does nothing to address growth restrictions in the Priority Funding Areas and municipalities, which are expected to absorb the bulk of future growth.

For growth to occur outside of the state-designated preferred areas on well and septic, SB 236 requires Carroll County to adopt the Tier system. However, the legislation only allows 6 months for the County to adopt these tiers, which requires amending our comprehensive plan to incorporate the tiers. This is simply not enough time to make thoughtful decisions and not having the tiers in place in time will result in a significant reduction in land development on well and septic and will have an adverse impact on most rural areas in the State.

The Carroll County Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests the Committee give this measure an unfavorable report. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Michael McMullin'. The signature is written in a cursive style.

Michael McMullin

President

Carroll County Chamber of Commerce

cc: Senator Joseph M. Getty
Delegate Susan W. Krebs
Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee Members