

WASHINGTON AREA BICYCLIST ASSOCIATION

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Comments of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association before the Transportation Planning Board June 17, 2009

Good afternoon. My name is Eric Gilliland and I'm the executive director of the Washington Area Bicyclist Association. I am here today mainly to express our concerns about the funding decisions made by this body regarding stimulus dollars and draft the FY 2010-2015 TIP. But before I do so I would like to again express the support of our association for the Purple Line Light Rail project.

The media unfortunately portrays the issue of the Purple Line as black and white. You either support the Capital Crescent Trail or you support the Purple Line, but not both. That is not the case with WABA. When finally constructed, the Purple Line will include a direct bike/ped link into the Silver Spring Transit Center where it will eventually link with the Metropolitan Branch Trail coming out of DC. This is a critical bicycle, pedestrian and transit project that must move forward.

I'm here today to talk about the lack of bike and pedestrian projects that have been approved by this body both for stimulus funds and in the draft FY 2010-2015 TIP. To paraphrase a certain former cabinet official, the TPB continues to fund the transportation system we have, not the one we wish we had. In spite of stated goals of this body of convenient bicycle and pedestrian access and increased mode share for biking and walking, the results of the last TPB Household Travel Survey show little improvement in these areas. Much of this has to do with the projects put forth by the jurisdictions for funding approval by the TBP.

So far there have been only two bike/ped projects funded with stimulus dollars, and little effort has been made to see how resurfacing money could be used to improve the bikeway network. Further, it is our understanding that bike/ped projects on the TIP in out years can be funded with stimulus dollars now, and new priority unfunded projects can be added, but this too has not happened.

FY 2010-2015 TIP includes over \$17 billion dollars worth of transportation projects, yet less than 1% of funds go to bike and pedestrian projects. Of \$168 million dollars in the bike/ped program, over 60% will be spent in DC alone and zero dollars allocated to bike and ped projects in Virginia. The value of the TIP amendments offer today alone are greater than the total value of bike and projects included in the draft TIP.

It's long past time for transportation leaders throughout the DC area to get serious about funding for bike and pedestrian projects. If the Transportation Planning Board truly believes that the future of transportation in the region is multimodal, then it needs to encourage it's members to put forth projects that will help move us in that direction.

Thank you for your time.

National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

June 17, 2009

Stephen Flippin, CSX Director Federal Affairs

Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to speak today.

I'd like to begin by commending the Transportation Planning Board for your foresight in creating the Freight Subcommittee to look at issues regarding freight mobility and planning.

Your staff has also been a pleasure to work with and continues to diligently work to better understand the freight rail industry in the Washington region.

As you are aware from the creation of this group, freight growth is continuing in this important area of the country and careful planning will help diminish negative impacts on communities and enhance the regional economy.

While current predictions of 60% growth by 2025 and 87% freight growth by 2035 may be off due to the current economy, even growth by half could have significant impacts if not carefully managed.

The National Gateway Initiative looks to create a more efficient rail corridor by removing obstructions that prevent running double-stack intermodal trains in an effort to better manage the growth in the Washington region.

The project offers over \$6 billion worth of public benefits, and has been endorsed by the Governors of Ohio, Pennsylvania, Maryland, Virginia, and North Carolina; the Ohio, Kentucky, Indiana COG and Toledo Metropolitan Area COG; along with 50 other associations and business, including Schneider National, UPS and The Limited.

The Washington region's ability to handle this increased traffic efficiently benefits the public in numerous ways:

- By expanding rail access and lessening overall freight shipping costs for the Washington region;
- By reducing congestion and emissions, as one train can carry the load of more than 280 trucks and gets 436 miles to the gallon per ton;
- By shifting about 70,000 trucks off District area highways each year, which equals less cars cutting through the city to avoid highway delays and reduced highway and road maintenance costs;
- Through, a new intermodal terminal to serve the region in nearby Maryland; and
- By elimination of key passenger (Amtrak/MARC/VRE) and freight bottlenecks with an efficient double-stack and double-track route through DC.

I look forward to continue working with the Board and staff on this and other projects, and am hopeful that the Metropolitan Washington Council of Governments will add your name to the growing list of supporters.

Again, thank you.



National Capital Region Transportation Planning Board

Meeting June 17, 2009

Public Comment submitted by Doug Guernsey COO Guernsey Office Products

Thank you for this opportunity to speak before the board and thank you to the Metropolitan Council of Governments, the Transportation Planning Board and specifically the Freight Subcommittee for taking on the issue of freight in our region. It is doubtful that many people reflect much on freight and how vital it is in sustaining our way of life; without the efficient flow of freight to feed our cities, I don't think there could be cities. On the other hand, freight can be a highly complex subject that has a large influence on our lives and it must be overwhelming and to a large extent thankless to have to grapple with a multitude of conflicting and potentially emotionally charged agendas.

I personally am mostly unaware of all of the behind the scenes work that goes on but I do know that our company does fit into one of the categories mentioned in some of the texts that I have read from the TPB: we are part of that group defined as "Trucks (that) carry the majority—approximately 76 percent—of the goods to, from, and within the region".

It should be safe to say that everyone in the region is impacted to some degree by the transportation infrastructure. If you are not directly and immediately involved in actual movement within the system, you are subject to the strengths and weaknesses of the flow of goods and other people throughout the region.

As a company that distributes office products and provides services to businesses in the region, our drivers not only have to contend with the third worst traffic in the Nation, but they also must deal with the difficult task of making the actual delivery. Getting there is only part of the job; making the delivery is often the hardest part, especially in highly urbanized compressed environments.

Of the many transportation concerns that face our company, there is one where we do have input regarding our experiences and that is the availability of loading options for our delivery drivers in Washington DC. There is a change that has been taking place over the past several months where curbside loading zones are being converted to metered zones. The perception is that these zones are shrinking in size and in some instances are intended to accommodate both private vehicles as well as commercial vehicles which exacerbates the shrinkage issue.

In addition, those zones that are specifically designated for commercial vehicles are often occupied by illegally parked private cars much like in the past. There is a compounding effect by shrinking the loading zones and or not enforcing the commercial zone restrictions

that are in place. The result is that the commercial delivery vehicle must double park or orbit the block until such time as a legitimate space becomes available; neither alternative is desirable.

Two real life experiences serve to illustrate the issue as well as a potential solution:

1. One of our drivers received a ticket for parking abreast (double parking). The driver pointed out to the ticket writer that the only reason he was double parked was because a private vehicle was taking up space in the commercial loading zone. The meter maid then gave the private vehicle a ticket as well.
2. A few years ago one of our drivers received a parking ticket for parking a commercial vehicle in a residential zone. The fine was \$500 and he had to pay it; that driver has never committed that infraction again.

Recognizing that the loading zone issue is undoubtedly more complicated than our limited street view interpretations, I still believe that curbside parking should be available for commercial loading wherever possible even to the extent that private meters are sacrificed. The everyday citizen has a variety of options available in order to visit a particular building; from walking, to mass transit, to parking in a lot, to parking a few blocks away, to taking a taxi, to even riding a bicycle - the delivery driver, however, has the one option which is to park in proximity to the building in order to make his delivery. In our own specific circumstance, off peak deliveries are made wherever available, but the opportunities to do so are rare.

Normally it is an affront to view an unoccupied space at a curb in the District but I would submit that it is OK. Being serious about reserving commercial loading zones for actual commercial loading and unloading is an overall good thing. It is safer, relieves traffic congestion, mitigates pollution and represents a potential source of income to the District from loading zone restriction violators.

I have often wondered if the job of delivery driver in downtown Washington DC can be performed legally and based on my observations, I believe that the answer is no. If the transportation officials in Washington DC believe that the flow of freight into the city is important and that the flow of traffic be maintained, I would request that they consider relieving the burden of the delivery driver by allowing him to perform his job as legitimately as possible and expanding the availability of commercial loading zones in the city.

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Statement of Support Proposed Amendment to the 2009 CLRP to include the **Purple Line Light Rail** Project in Montgomery & Prince George's County, MD

Craig G. Simpson, Political & Legislative Representative
June 15, 2009

Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Local 689 strongly supports the medium investment Light Rail alternative directly connecting Bethesda, Silver Spring, Langley Park, University of Maryland, Riverdale Park & New Carrollton.

This proposed line would provide a direct connection to the two Maryland sections of the Metrorail Red Line (at Bethesda & Silver Spring) thereby alleviating pressure on the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority's (WMATA)'s downtown core capacity. The Purple Line will also connect with Metrorail at the Green Line at College Park and Orange Line at New Carrollton providing alternative Metrorail connections outside of downtown Washington, D.C.

This critical east-west transit link will greatly expand the mass transit option for tens of thousands of residents in the inner suburbs at the same time as providing important connections to job centers for residents throughout the region.

While our union is an enthusiastic supporter of bus rapid transit (BRT) and bus priority measures, we have carefully examined studies conducted and have concluded that light rail is the appropriate mode for this corridor and that the connection to downtown Bethesda is more productive than an alternative connection via BRT to Naval Medical/NIH. The light rail transit option will bring in more new transit users than other modes studied and cut average transit travel times more than other modes.

After thoroughly examining the environmental mitigations proposed and the environmental benefits created, we also find that light rail transit is the best alternative for reducing carbon emissions. Further, building the light rail line will insure that the bike trail from Bethesda to Silver Spring will be completed and upgraded, thereby adding an additional transportation mode to the corridor.

We have also looked closely at the economic benefits of the light rail transit option and find it to be superior to other options. After examining the data, we have concluded a light rail line in this

corridor will encourage transit oriented development around a number of stations thus discouraging sprawl. It will also help to stabilize and revitalize some of the older neighborhoods along the corridor.

ATU Local 689 encourages this body to approve air quality testing for the Purple Line in June using the best practices available, add the Purple Line to the CLRP in the fall and support federal funding for the project.

ATU Local 689 is a labor union that represents 7,500 active members at WMATA and another 2,500 retired members.

Hi, I'm Nate Trager from Falls Church, Virginia. The reason I am here today is because as an environmentalist, a naturalist, and a DC area resident, I am in favor of the Purple Line.

Although I live in Falls Church, I spent most of my life as a Montgomery County resident and have enjoyed the Capital Crescent Trail since I was very young. While in undergrad I used it to bike to school, saving money by avoiding parking, gas, and metro fees.

As an environmentalist I have volunteered for advocacy groups, helping with environmental issues. Pursuing an interest in nature, I have lived in the wilderness, studied it, and worked for the federal government to protect it. I highly value nature scientifically and personally.

If we are going to protect America's natural heritage we have to use existing infrastructure in developed areas, so that cities can remain vital and avoid destructive sprawl. In the case of the Purple Line, the trees that will be cut down to accommodate this Light Rail Train will make it possible to protect many natural areas further outside of the District. The Purple Line alone is not a guarantee against further environmental destruction, but it is an important step in the right direction.

More roads lead to more congestion because they promote development further away from central locations. The Purple Line is an excellent opportunity to encourage walkable communities.

It's time that we start rewarding those who use public transit and make it desirable to use, instead of making it a chore. If we make public transit efficient and user-friendly, we can live in communities where cars are not necessary for most errands. We can reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, improve our walking and biking trails, and help alleviate traffic. The Purple Line is a critical transit project for our whole region, and I encourage you to make sure it is built soon.

Thank you.

The Story of the Purple Line (A Lesson in History)

**Remember those great folks back in the 1950's, who wanted to put a highway on top of the abandoned C&O Canal and ruin the Potomac riverside as a park?
*(Or would you really prefer a path beside a busy highway?)***

Well, they're at it again.

**Now they want to put an 1890's interurban trolley (AKA "Light Rail") on top of an abandoned freight line (now the Capital Crescent Trail) and ruin the area's most-used park.
*(Would you really prefer a treeless path beside a busy rail line?)***

**Just like the highway down the C&O Canal...
*(Justice William Douglas, where are you now that we need you again?)***

Respectfully submitted,
Rolf Sinclair
7508 Tarrytown Road
Chevy Chase MD

The Purple Line

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The Environmental Impact Statement on the Purple Line makes it clear that the visual degradation of the Georgetown Branch Trail between Silver Spring and Bethesda will be "severe." Users of the Trail have known this for a very long time, but our concerns go further than the loss of a trail that provides a visually attractive experience for walkers and cyclists.

We know that the Chevy Chase Land Company has plans to develop its site at Chevy Chase Lake East on Connecticut Avenue. Bethesda continues to develop high-density housing and commercial facilities, and plans for a similar pattern along the proposed route for the Purple Line east of Silver Spring are in the pipeline. There are good reasons to develop existing urban and suburban sites, rather than continue the sprawl into rural Maryland. Increasing pressure on road users makes long commuter routes less attractive, and we must do everything possible to reduce dependence on cars. However, it is also clear that growth in high-density housing and employment in urban and suburban areas makes the need for green recreational spaces more essential than ever. Mass transit has many virtues, especially when we face challenges to the nature of our energy consumption and the need to reduce carbon emissions, but it also has its drawbacks, and that includes degradation of the environment. We must be prepared to build mass transit schemes that do not remove green spaces, even if that means greater expense by routing underground. Green spaces are not simply visual assets, they support diverse ecosystems, reduce water run-off – scarcely mentioned in the EIS – reduce urban noise and air pollution.

Construction of the Purple Line would not only take out many trees on the Georgetown Branch Trail that provide the visual impact mentioned in the EIS. It will divide communities along the proposed route, an intervention that transforms lives negatively, and threatens to impair diversity in residential and economic life. The route, once a single-track railway, cannot accommodate safely a two-track, frequent high-speed service. There are other alternatives open to Montgomery and Prince George's Counties that do not carry such negative outcomes; for example, the Beltway Loop or an underground route designed to take more cars off the Beltway and East West Highway than the proposed plan. It would also make obvious good sense to route the Purple Line with a direct connection to Medical Center.

As it stands, the proposed Purple Line demonstrates weakness of vision at a time when we need a mass transit infrastructure that is far more robust and flexible for the Greater Washington region. It is easy to make fiscal stress an excuse for not standing ground against schemes that degrade what little we have left of accessible green urban space, and that fracture existing communities. Please return to the drawing board.

Yours sincerely

Sarah Richards
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Pedestrian Railway Deaths Recurring Problem in Maryland

By MEGAN MILLER
Capital News Service
Tuesday, May 5, 2009

WASHINGTON - Tragedy hit Laurel on April 23, when a 14-year-old boy reportedly taking a shortcut across railroad tracks was struck by a CSX train and died.

Unfortunately, nothing about the fatal accident is all that unusual.

Since 2003 Prince George's County has averaged slightly more than one death per year from people trespassing on railroad property, according to Federal Railroad Administration data.

Montgomery County sees the most trespasser fatalities in Maryland, averaging three deaths per year, and claiming 33 percent of the state's 55 total deaths since 2003. It has the highest population of any Maryland county, and sees heavy railroad traffic from both MARC service and freight trains running through Maryland to West Virginia.

* Overall, the state has averaged slightly more than nine trespasser deaths per year since 2003.

"Trespassing on a railroad's private property and along railroad rights of way is the leading cause of rail-related fatalities in America," said a 2008 report by the Federal Railroad Administration. Nationwide, there are about 500 trespassing-related deaths every year.

Some of the problem is that people who aren't paying attention may not hear a train coming, said Rob Kulat, a spokesman for the FRA.

"Locomotives are much quieter now, and also we have what's called continuous welded rail. The sections of rail are welded together, so you don't have that 'clickety-clack' sound like you did in the past," Kulat explained. "People who are talking on a cell phone or listening to an iPod aren't going to hear it. A train going 60 mph takes about a mile to stop, so there's no way the train can stop in time."

Transit officials say trespass fatalities happen for a variety of reasons -- everything from accidents with people who cross train tracks as a shortcut to people who choose trains as a means of committing suicide.

"We did a demographics study that shows that the average trespass fatality is a 34-year-old white male who is drunk," Kulat said.

Trespasser activity on railroad tracks, even without an actual accident, also causes delays in train service, because any suspicious activity must be investigated, said Maryland Transit Administration spokeswoman Jawauna Greene.

"Especially after 9/11, when trespassers are spotted by engineers or spotted by people on the train, we do have to investigate and inspect for sabotage. If nothing else, from a security perspective," Greene said.

Capital News Service analyzed MARC data on the documented causes of train delays for the period from January 2003 through November 2008. About 40 trespasser-related incidents resulted in MARC train delays during that six-year period.

Of those delays, about 15 occurred because a trespasser was actually struck by either a MARC or freight train, according to the data notations.

In the non-accident cases, the trespasser activities varied widely. For example, in the two-year period from January 2005 through the end of December 2006, MARC train travel was delayed on nine separate days for trespasser-related reasons not actually involving an accident. Two were due to apparent suicide attempts -- one person lying on the tracks, another on a bridge above the tracks. On July 20, 2006, service was delayed due to "juveniles" throwing stones at train cars.

On June 27, 2006, train traffic was delayed due to people "dancing" on the tracks. "Necessary to have the police go and remove the 'dancing people' from the scene," the record reads.

Probably the most bizarre delay recorded in the MARC data occurred on Aug. 16, 2004, when train travel halted due to police investigating a "human hand found in the switch."

Any time a trespasser is spotted it sets off a chain reaction along the train line, explained Greene. The MTA contracts with Amtrak to handle most investigations and inspections of that nature.

"They would call in their inspectors and send inspectors and supervisors out," Green said. "They also can contact law enforcement, and in a lot of cases these agencies have agreements with local law enforcement to get additional assistance."

Inspectors assess the situation, then take the necessary next step, be it calling in mental health experts for an attempted suicide or law enforcement for a security threat.

Of course, the entire process creates transit delays. Everything from scheduling of train platforms to track switching can be affected.

"When trains are late people think, 'Oh, what the heck are they doing?' But behind the scenes there could be any number of things going on," Greene said.

* Even fences built along railroad tracks aren't enough of an obstacle to deter trespassers.

"You can't fence off every bit of track, and when you try to do that people cut holes in it," Kulat said. "This is a steady, consistent problem, of deaths that are preventable."

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Statement of Linda Skalet for The Bethesda Civic Coalition
June 17, 2009

I represent the Bethesda Civic Coalition, a group composed of residents of Bethesda's central Business district. We have literally watched from our windows as Bethesda has grown into a flourishing business and entertainment center. Our perspective gives us a unique ability to see and evaluate the impact of changes to our city.

The proposal for a Purple Line on the Georgetown Branch Trail terminating at Woodmont East would in our opinion have a devastating effect on what has become the Heart of Bethesda. The tail tracks required for car maintenance would destroy the only green space left in Bethesda's primary entertainment district. They would encroach on the small open space which has naturally become the gathering point for the Bethesda Row neighborhood. It is where people begin and end their walks, runs and bikerides, meet neighbors, drink coffee, eat ice cream and dine at Mon Ami Gabi's outdoor tables.

The loss of this space coupled with the loss of the Georgetown Branch Trail, which is an extraordinary and irreplaceable urban amenity, would be a tragedy. But what makes the prospect of the Purple Line's destructive impact on downtown Bethesda even more frustrating to us is that it will not solve our traffic problems. The bulk of new traffic coming westward to Bethesda will be headed for The Naval Hospital Medical Center and the relocated Walter Reed Hospital, not to downtown Bethesda. We think that our mass transit needs would be more economically and effectively met by bus rapid transit along Jones Bridge Road connecting to the Red Line at the Medical Center.

Lastly, I have asked repeatedly for specifics on just how and where the proposed Purple Line would connect to the Red Line Metro Station in Bethesda. MTA representatives have never been able to show me specific information on the location, engineering and cost to connect the two lines. It would be imprudent and irresponsible to proceed without clear information as to how the connection will be accomplished and at what cost, and this information should be considered by the decision makers and made available to the public.

Oral Testimony for June 17, 2009 Hearing
Francesca Kelly
7907 Kentbury Drive
Bethesda, MD 20814

The Purple Line, as currently planned, is an outdated project that is not a wise use of funds. Here are seven reasons why:

1. **It doesn't address larger traffic issues in the region that affect many more people.** A heavy-rail connection of the radiating arms of Metro lines, either underground or above-ground along existing roadways such as the Beltway, would be more cost-effective in the long run, and take many more cars off the road.
2. **It does not properly address the BRAC expansion.** At least 2200 more workers will start at Navy Medical Center in the next 2 years. Yet the head of the Purple Line will be in downtown Bethesda, 1.5 miles away, requiring inconvenient transfers.
3. **It will destroy 17 acres of mature forest and natural habitat.** All the trees lining the Trail will come down, along with their attendant wildlife.
4. **It will not be built on already existing roadways as many effective European trams are, but on the most popular trail in Montgomery County, averaging 10,000 uses per week.**
5. **It puts two rail lines where there is only room enough for one. The original freight train that came through several times a week was on a single track.** Many of us believe that the first thing to be sacrificed will be the trail component of the plan. If at least a 66-foot width is needed for this project, and the distance between some homes across the Trail is less than that, do the math – houses may come down too.
6. **It will have at-grade crossings and so be a danger to pedestrians who are used to crossing the Trail, especially school children. Overall, Maryland has averaged nine pedestrian train deaths per year since 2003.** If the trains are as quiet as they're purported to be, then pedestrians will not hear them approach. And if the trains are not quiet, we have another problem, that of noise in residential neighborhoods.
7. **It will diminish the quality of life of residents near the Trail.** And trains down the middle of the trail will permanently divide neighborhoods where families and friends are now connected.

Many of us are all for public transport. But destroying a green space to create it is just backwards thinking. Using existing roadways, or going underground, makes so much more sense. The issue isn't about "Not in My Backyard." The question instead should be, "Why in ANYONE's backyard?" Please rethink the Purple Line.

Mary S. Rivkin, University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC)

Testimony to Maryland COG Transportation Planning Board – June 17, 2009

Good afternoon. I am Mary Rivkin, Associate Professor of Education at UMBC, and an advocate for children being outdoors. I am here today to defend the ongoing existence of the Capital Crescent Trail because it is an important outdoor space for children in lower Montgomery County.

There is increasing empirical evidence that being outdoors in nature is good for children, for instance, reducing symptoms of ADHD. Comprehensive and recent reviews of such research can be read at www.childrenandnature.org. The State of Maryland has strongly supported this point with the Governor's 2008 Executive Order on Children in Nature and its subsequent report on actions and policies the State should support in order to increase children's access to and enjoyment of natural space (at www.dnr.state.md.us/). I participated in writing this report and endorse its conclusions. National support for children in nature may soon be legislated by passage of the bill titled *No Child Left Inside*, co-sponsored by Maryland Congressman Jon Sarbanes. Indeed, President Obama only Monday told the American Medical Association that children should "spend more time playing outside."

The Capital Crescent Trail is a perfect example of what is most important in bringing children into nature—it is close to many children. The term is "nearby nature." Children no longer roam freely outdoors as in past generations, but rather need to be accompanied to natural areas. The long stretch of trail from Bethesda to Silver Spring is accessible to many children and their families who bike and walk to it, and once there enjoy safe, uncomplicated exercise and pleasure. Because it is nearby to so many in the densely populated down-county area, it receives constant use.

Anyone who has ridden bikes with children knows the overhanging fear of cars that shadows such rides; but once on the Trail the only shadows are from the abundant trees. In fact, the trees, shrubs, and wildflowers of the mature woods lining the Trail constitute an argument for the Trail as excellent "nearby nature," rich in diversity, rich in vistas—think of the views of the creek valley in the changing seasons. If we want children to grow to be stewards of the natural world, they need to experience the natural unbuild world. Unfortunately, a track with a fast train every few minutes hurtling by a narrow path landscaped with tiny trees cannot replace the singular stretch of beauty and peace that the Trail is now. No one will be able to call the proposed Purple Line "nearby nature."

And a further regret for the down-county children must be that "nearby nature" will not be increased elsewhere in the area. More density and more infill argue against creating accessible nature places for children. No one gains short term profits from children's age-old explorations of rocks, bushes, trees and streams. Yet, society, we all, gain from children knowing and loving their home place—first they love the Trail and Rock Creek Park, and then they love more largely, the whole planet, we hope.

Governor O'Malley has proclaimed an "Outdoor Bill of Rights" for children (www.governor.maryland/documents/OutdoorBillOfRights.pdf). I urge the Members of the Transportation Planning Board to conserve the Capital Crescent Trail and safeguard these rights.

Hello. My name is Nathaniel Decker and I'm here to speak in favor of the Purple Line. I currently live at 3300 16th St. NW in the district, but when I first moved to this region I lived in Wheaton. The main reason I support the Purple Line comes from my time in Wheaton, particularly when I went to visit my friends in Cleveland Park. Since I didn't have a car at the time, the most efficient way for me to get from Wheaton to Cleveland Park was to take the red line, which took me all the way down to Union Station. Though I did get a lot of reading done on these trips, the problems I had getting to where I wanted to go eventually led me to move to the district.

And from my perspective that's why the Purple Line is a wonderful project. By giving people more options to quickly get to where they want to go, you'll get less congestion on the roads, less time lost in transit, and, in the end, the project will make the area around the Purple Line a better place to live. The Purple Line will improve not only the region's transit system but also the system of bike and walking trails. By completing the Georgetown Branch Trail and connecting it to the Capitol Crescent Trail, the project will provide more recreation and commuting options for bikers and pedestrians.

I've heard that one of the main concerns people have with the Purple Line is the loss of trees along the right of way. While this is clearly an important issue, to me the real question is whether the project is valuable enough to the region to justify cutting down trees. I think the loss of trees is an acceptable price to pay for the benefits the Purple Line will bring. By giving people more efficient ways to get to where they want to go the Purple Line will improve the region in which we all live.

Thank you for your time and attention.