

AN OPEN LETTER TO COMPTROLLER PETER FRANCHOT

August 1, 2011

Peter Franchot, Comptroller
State of Maryland
Goldstein Treasury Building
80 Calvert St.,
Annapolis, MD 21404-0466

Dear Mr. Franchot:

On behalf of the State Center Neighborhood Alliance, Inc., and the thousands of Baltimore City residents, taxpayers, and homeowners we represent, we write to express our dismay and disappointment at your change from support to denigration of the State Center project.

You have cast many votes on this project, mostly in favor. You have asked questions and probed, often leading to tailoring of the project to better meet the needs of the State and of the surrounding communities (e.g., more support for local jobs).

Overall, your repeated support has helped to move this project forward, indicating to the community your partnership in our hard work toward the revitalization of our neighborhoods.

Your letter to Secretaries Swaim-Staley and Collins indicates that you now don't support the project in its current form. Although you are neither the developer nor the state official responsible for the project, it would seem prudent for you to mention what form would regain your support, especially since the current form is so similar to the form it has been since you began supporting it.

Without this information, the community and the press are left thinking that your change of position is a purely political move and that Inner Harbor business interests outweigh the promises to neighborhoods indicated in your votes to move the project forward. The wealthy businessmen with whom you now side have dismissed this project and our working-class community as undeserving, and our very worthwhile project has been tossed around as a political convenience.

This project is much more to us than a line item on a political agenda; it's our homes, our livelihoods, and our families.

If this project does not go forward, what we are offered instead is either a 28-acre site dividing our neighborhoods, open just 8 hours a day, 5 days a week - or worse: a concrete wasteland of empty parking lots and vacant buildings.

**State Center Neighborhood Alliance, Inc., c/o BUL, 512 Orchard Street, Baltimore, MD 21201
EMAIL: sneighborhoodalliance@gmail.com**

Page 2 – August 1, 2011
Open Letter to Peter Franchot

Other public-private ventures in the State, such as the massive redevelopment of Silver Spring's downtown, have received State financial support – with hundreds of millions of dollars in public funds, including property tax credits and income tax credits to businesses and commercial landowners, as well as credits to individuals who lived near their work. The Silver Spring project was provided a streamlined permits and approvals process to give “special priority” to the private developers and business investing in the area.

We are not criticizing the way Silver Spring was developed as a public-private venture. We are merely pointing out that the State Center project has been treated in a vastly different manner, and Baltimore City is in need of such development in ways that Montgomery County – the wealthiest jurisdiction in the state – is not.

We're saddened that the State Center project and the surrounding residents and communities appear to be casualties in a campaign season that's barely begun.

Sincerely,



John E. Kyle, President
State Center Neighborhood Alliance, Inc.

representing
Druid Heights Community Development Corporation
Heritage Crossing Residents Association
Historic Marble Hill Community Association
McCulloh Homes Resident Council
Madison Park Improvement Association
Midtown Development Corporation
Mount Royal Improvement Association
Mount Vernon/Belvedere Association
Pennsylvania Avenue Redevelopment Collaborative, Inc. (PARC)
Seton Hill Association
United Baptist Missionary Convention & Auxiliaries, Inc.
Upton Planning Committee, Inc.