

PlanMaryland: At the Crossroads – Forum Takeaways

Christopher Monckton – Climate Change Abatement Costs

- Needed – proper cost/benefit analysis
- Cost of curbing CO2 emissions in Maryland hundreds to thousands of times greater than focused adaptation. Mitigation results would be so small as to be immeasurable
- Focused adaptation if/when necessary. Let technology and markets do their job
- Sea level rise – Not happening. Latest data suggests 2 in./century at most
- Worsening coastal storms – Not happening
- Modest warming beneficial to agriculture, wildlife
- Chinese CO2 increases more every month than if Maryland reduced emissions to zero

Wendell Cox – Economic Premises

- Premise: Cars remove wealth from society. False. Cars allow for more flexible mobility, providing for greater economic growth and wealth creation
- Premise: Transit is preferable to highways. False. Nearly all mobility is by highway. No metropolitan region in affluent nations has successfully shifted to transit
- Premise: Transit is required for low income mobility. False. Only 7.9% of jobs in metro Baltimore are accessible by transit. Most people in all income groups use autos
- Premise: Compact development assures affordable housing for all income levels. False. Compact development raises housing prices. Low income groups are disadvantaged
- Premise: Compact development supports better health. False. Compact development increases air pollution and worsens health effects
- Premise: Compact development reduces greenhouse gas emissions. False. Compact development ineffective. GHG can be reduced w/o lifestyle changes through technological improvements
- Premise: Smart Growth increases tax revenues, reduces cost to government. False. Smart Growth reduces tax revenues and increases cost to government (Commissioner Rothschild)

Patrick Moffitt – Environmental Concerns and Highlands Act Impact on New Jersey

- PlanMaryland: Risk to landowner equity not addressed
- Agricultural issues not properly framed; erroneous data
- Water supply and water quality issues inaccurately characterized
- Other natural resource issues inaccurately characterized
- Environmental risks not properly addressed or identified
- Devil in the details – failure to ask right questions leads to incorrect premises

George Frigon – Septic vs Waste Water Treatment Plants

- Premise: Nitrogen from septics is 10 times more than WWTP. False. Little difference between them
- Fact: WWTPs deplete aquifers by removing groundwater and discharging it in the bay
- Fact: Septics recharge groundwater and are therefore more sustainable
- Fact: Septics are no more damaging to the Chesapeake Bay than WWTP
- Fact: Septic nitrogen loading virtually identical to WWTP per household
- Current knowledge of nitrogen processes insufficient to justify septic regulations Plan advocates

Ed Braddy – Quality of Life and Property Rights

- PlanMaryland does not reflect popular opinion
- Autos: Exaggerates costs/ignores benefits
- Compact Development: Exaggerates benefits/ignores costs
- Transit: Exaggerates benefits/ignores costs
- Suburbs: Exaggerates costs/ignores benefits
- Vitiates private property rights