



EAST COUNTY CITIZENS ADVISORY BOARD

May 19, 2016

The Honorable Isiah Leggett
County Executive
Executive Office Building
101 Monroe Street, 2nd Floor
Rockville, Maryland 20850

Dear Mr. Leggett,

The East County Citizens Advisory Board (ECCAB) has been made aware of the unfortunate closure of the Briggs Chaney strip mall anchor grocery store Safeway located at 13814 Outlet Drive in the Briggs Chaney area of Silver Spring. This is devastating to the community since many residents within a one mile radius use bus transportation and are walking commuters. As a result, having no grocery store within distance of high density multi-residential dwellings and apartments, basically leaves the community in a “food desert.”

Additionally, in light of the county council’s mission to support economic development and BRT in East County and in support of the Washington Adventist Hospital and the Fairland and White Oak Science Gateway Master Plans, we are concerned over other collateral consequences to the closure of another anchor grocery store in the Briggs Chaney area:

- 1) Access to healthy foods for sustaining a healthy community, and
- 2) Stability of surrounding businesses and small businesses whose franchises require the presence of an anchor store

We encourage the County government to provide assistance, as feasible, to the property managers of the Briggs Chaney shopping center to help locate a tenant that will grow with the community, permanently. Any temporary fix will only negatively impact our economy within East County and will hinder families from conveniently getting the groceries they need. We encourage the shopping strip property management company to locate another grocery store, similar to Safeway, as a replacement. We strongly prefer a national or regional brand to boost the economy.

In addition, if a tenant is not located by May 31st we suggest the County assist with additional community outreach. This can include:

- Promoting and working with the available subsidized food service agencies that exist in East County such as Manna Food Center
- Communicating transportation routes to alternative nearby grocery stores
- Encouraging online shopping

This change in our community is a potential public health threat and has a major impact on the community's everyday lifestyle and quality of life. We need the support of our County government and the Briggs Chaney Shopping Center property management to ensure the Briggs Chaney community continues to grow vibrantly.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Anthony Ramirez', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Anthony Ramirez, Chair
East County Citizens Advisory Board

CC: Jewru Bandeh, ECRSC Director