

Good evening, my name is Linda Bowers I reside at 8611 Honeysuckle Court in Ellicott City and have been a Howard County resident and proud employee of PepsiCo for the last 24 years.

I work out of our Mid-Atlantic Region Office, located right here in Howard County and not far from where we are this evening. At this facility we have nearly 100 employees who manage Pepsi and Frito Lay's operations for 5 states and the District of Columbia. In addition, we have recently invested in a new state of the art distribution facility - again, right here in Howard County, employing even more hard working people.

We not only have invested in our business here in Howard County, but also in our community. We are a good corporate citizen who supports many organizations and programs that better the lives of our fellow citizens. A few examples include The Maryland Food bank, Wounded Warriors, and Toy for Tots to name a few.

As a long-time Pepsi employee, I have seen firsthand how my company has expanded our product portfolio that now provides many choices for our customers – choices that they make for themselves, not what the government thinks they should choose. Restricting these products, or putting a hidden tax on them, the same products that support good-paying jobs and worthy projects across Howard County is simply misguided and wrong.

In conclusion, my company is doing the right thing – by our products, the choices we offer and our strong investment in Howard County and our fellow citizens. I ask that you consider all of these important factors and oppose County Bill 17.