

City to fight transfer of areas to Arundel

■ Several sections of S. Baltimore want out.

By Jon Morgan
Evening Sun Staff

City officials are vowing to fight a proposed spin-off of several South Baltimore neighborhoods to Anne Arundel County, saying the loss in tax revenue would hurt the cash-strapped city.

The city submitted a written statement of opposition but kept silent at a hearing yesterday in Annapolis on a bill that would allow the transfer of several neighborhoods — Brooklyn, Curtis Bay, Hawkins Point and Fairfield — and some 14,000 residents to Anne Arundel County if the residents approved such a move in referendum.

About 60 residents boarded chartered buses and drove to Annapolis to attend the hearing before the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee on the bill sponsored by Sen. George W. Della Jr., D-City.

Della acknowledged that the bill stands little chance of success against unified opposition from the rest of the city's Senate delegation.

A fiscal note prepared by legislative analysts said that allowing Anne Arundel County to annex the South Baltimore neighborhoods would cost the city more than \$12 million a year in lost taxes. The analysts acknowledged the city would also save money by not having to provide services in the area, but said the extent of those savings would be difficult to estimate.

On the revenue side, Baltimore would lose \$3.6 million a year in local income taxes and \$8.9 million in property taxes, the analysts said. Anne Arundel County would gain all of the income tax revenue but only \$3.7 million in property taxes, because its tax rate is less than half Baltimore's. The county's rate is \$2.46 per \$100 of assessed value, compared with the city's rate of \$5.95.

Doug Brown, a revenue analyst with the city's budget bureau, said in an interview he could not estimate the city's net financial loss, but he felt it would be substantial. In addition to losing income and property taxes, he said, the city could lose energy and telephone taxes, dealing a

significant blow to the city's \$1.76 billion operating budget.

"Can the city afford to lose \$1? The answer is no," Brown said.

"We think it's an idea that's neither timely nor worth exploring," said Peter N. Marudas, a top aide to Mayor Kurt L. Schmoke. He said the mayor has asked the city's senators to oppose the legislation. "I've not seen any interest in it among the rest of the city delegation," Marudas added.

Residents who spoke at the hearing criticized the city for everything from high taxes to poor police protection.

"We're paying the same tax rate as the people in Guilford and Roland Park, and they're getting the desert and we're getting the garbage," said Don Mawn, vice president of the Concerned Citizens for a Better Brooklyn.

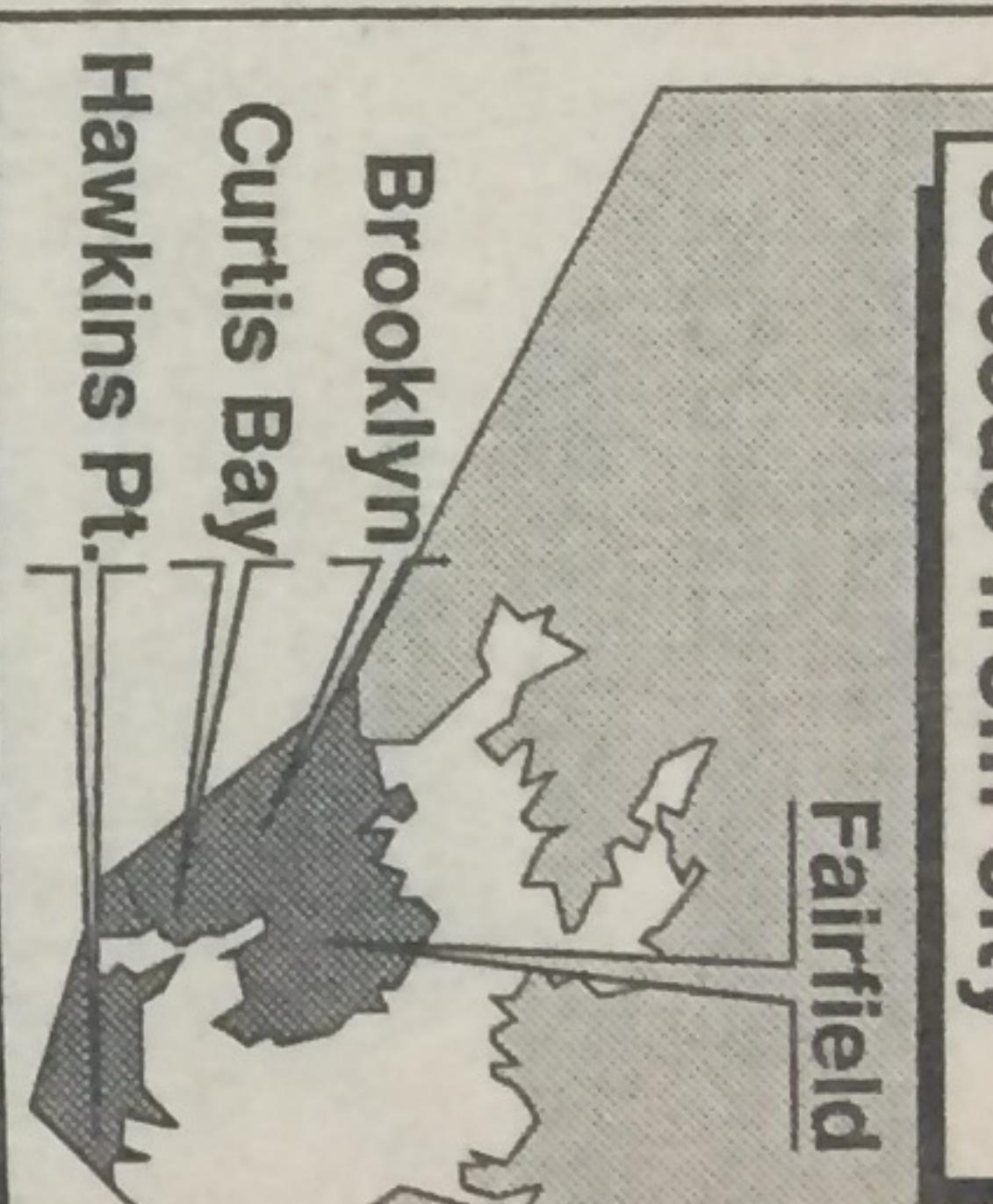
The residents contend that the city has steered dangerous and unsightly industry to their region, leaving it a "dumping ground." The area is home to chemical factories, waste dumps, coal piers and sewage-treatment plants.

City Councilman Timothy D. Murphy, D-6th, who would lose a district to represent if the secession took place, testified in support of the bill.

"The measure is nothing short of the embodiment of the frustration of the people in the area," Murphy said.

Areas seeking to secede from city

Baltimore



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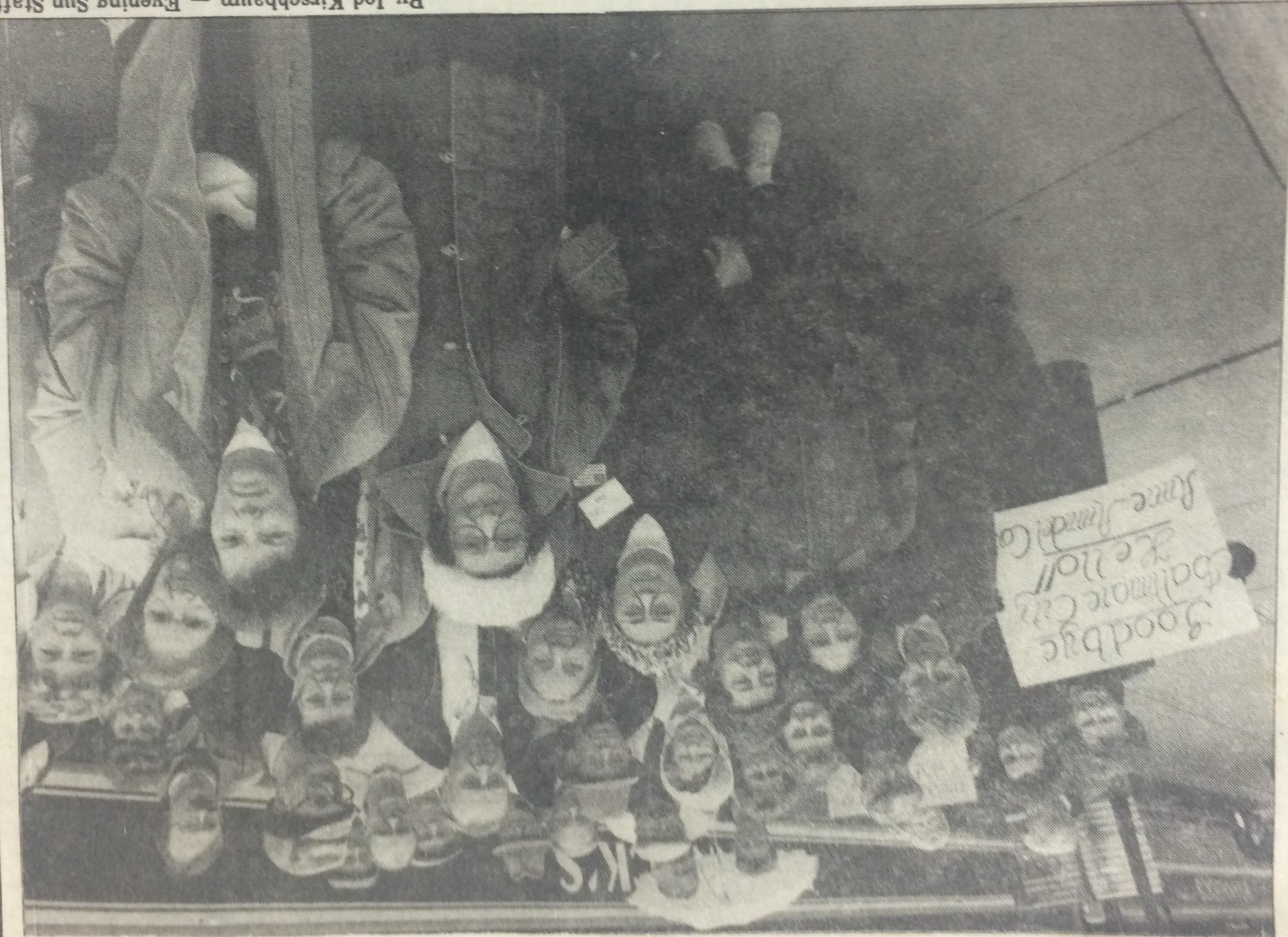
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OFF TO ANNAPOLIS: Members of Con-
gress went to Annapolis yesterday to argue for
a bill to end the secession from the city. See story, D3.

By Jed Kirschbaum — Evening Sun Staff



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Brooklyn-Curtis Bay most polluted

Study unclear about impact on Anne Arundel County

By TIM PRATT

Staff Writer

Some of the most polluted air in the country is found just across the Baltimore City line in Brooklyn and Curtis Bay, according to a report released this week by a Washington, D.C., nonprofit organization.

The report, released Thursday by Environmental Integrity Project, says despite improvements to the Brandon Shores and Wagner coal-fired power plants in Pasadena, Curtis Bay was the top ZIP code in Maryland for toxic air pollution

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POLLUTE

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from local facilities in 2010.

The Curtis Bay ZIP code includes parts of Anne Arundel County, with neighborhoods such as Orchard Beach, and Baltimore City.

The nonprofit looked at monitoring information for fine particulate matter, mortality rates from certain diseases that have been associated with air pollution exposure, and data relating to cancer and respiratory risks, said Leah Kelly, an attorney with the group.

The group said the rankings are based on data from the most recent National Air Toxics Assessment by the federal Environmental Protection Agency.

Among other problems, the report cited a lack of monitoring stations in neighborhoods to check on particulate matter and ground level ozone.

The group focused their report on Curtis Bay, Brooklyn and Hawkins Point. Kelly said it is difficult to use information in the report to evaluate air quality in northern Anne Arundel County because "a difference of a few miles can make a big

difference in air pollution levels."

"One set of information that we used is specific to ZIP code 21226, which extends into northern Anne Arundel County. This information is from EPA's Toxic Release Inventory, and pertains to the quantity of toxic air pollution released from facilities in that ZIP code. In 2010, 21226 was the top ZIP code in Maryland, and 74th in the United States, for highest quantity of toxic air pollution released from facilities in that ZIP code, according to TRI. However, again, it is difficult to say how this relates to the rest of northern Anne Arundel County," she wrote.

The group is calling for increased air quality monitoring in the area, noting there currently are no ground monitors.

Constellation Energy, which is in the process of selling the power plants because of its merger with Exelon Energy, has spent millions of dollars improving the emissions quality of the Brandon Shores plant. Despite the improvements, the study says the emissions remain a potential health problem.

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The Definition of Environmental Justice

ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, culture, education, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. *Fair Treatment* means that no group of people, including racial, ethnic, or socioeconomic groups, should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, municipal, and commercial operations or the execution of federal, state, local, and tribal environmental programs, and policies.

Major Particulate Matter Sources Impacting Zip Code 21226

