I'm writing to let all members of the Stop Costco Gas Coalition know that we have established a NEW coalition, to carry forward the effort to convince the Maryland Assembly to pass a law that would mandate a 'safe' setback between any mega gas station and such 'sensitive land uses' as homes, schools, playgrounds, etc. The name of the new group is "The Mega Gas Station Setback Coalition". The website is

www.megagassetback.org

One of the two objectives of the Stop Costco Gas Coalition - from its inception - was to push for such legislation. In fact we had a bill introduced last year, but it didn't get out of Committee in the House and we withdrew it in the Senate. Relentless lobbying by Costco had convinced legislators that the bill was only about Costco (it wasn't) and that the issue is a "land use issue" (it is primarily a public health issue).

We had always presumed that, no matter how the Wheaton Costco issue was decided, we would form a new coalition, with a more generic name, and press public health safety through buffer protection from large gas stations. And we have now done that. It is unclear when/how the Wheaton Costco matter will be resolved - but we believe we have amply demonstrated that the request to build that specific mega gas station should be denied.

We invite you to visit our website. And, if you share our belief that this is not just a Wheaton issue, but one that potentially impacts many other communities, please JOIN US! Remember urban Big Box stores with large gas stations could be headed to your community next!

Abigail B. Adelman

Chair, MGSSC