



Wes Moore, Governor
Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor
Josh Kurtz, Acting Secretary
Allan Fisher, Deputy Secretary

March 1, 2023

BILL NUMBER: House Bill 289 – First Reader

SHORT TITLE: Maryland Forestry Education Fund - Establishment

DEPARTMENT’S POSITION: SUPPORT

EXPLANATION OF DEPARTMENT’S POSITION

The Department supports HB 289. The bill would provide training and education to counties, towns and homeowners that would assist the Maryland Forest Service in maintaining existing healthy forests and expanding tree canopy cover.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Maryland Forestry Foundation is a non-profit corporation organized under the laws of Maryland and designated as tax-exempt [501(c)(3)] with a mission that includes management of fundraising efforts of Maryland’s Forest Conservancy District Boards and assistance in allocating and distributing financial resources among the Boards. The Maryland Forest Conservancy District Boards are county entities established under Maryland law to assist the Maryland Forest Service by promoting forestry through education in their county.

BILL EXPLANATION

This bill establishes a Maryland Forestry Education Fund with the purpose of enabling the Maryland Forestry Foundation and the district forestry boards to provide education and resources to Maryland’s forest landowners and local governments. The fund can only be used to provide training and education on advances in healthy forest management, emerging forestry threats, climate science, sustainability, and other pertinent topics. This will be accomplished through a biannual forest sustainability conference, peer-to-peer learning exchange, outreach and small grants.

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